Papers, Original and Selected.

THE PAST AND PRESENT OF THE RAGGED SCHOOL UNION.

ITS FUTURE WORK.

In consequence of the altered circumstances of the Primary Education Question, brought about by the Education Act of 1870, it is needful to remodel and extend the plans of the Ragged School Union.

The Society was established nearly thirty years since for the express purpose of bringing under useful and Christian teaching the neglected children of London and its suburbs. Such, indeed, was the deplorable condition of large masses of the juvenile population at that time that thousands had never entered a school, and were growing up in every kind of ignorance and depravity. It became necessary, therefore, to establish special Day and Night Schools, and in order to indicate the class to be reached, and to keep to that class solely, the new order of Schools was designated

"RAGGED" SCHOOLS.

That there should be no barrier to admission to these schools by those most needing them they were made

FREE SCHOOLS:

1. Because it was a well ascertained fact that there were thousands of children too low in the social scale to pay the smallest fee for education; in fact, it was found that, instead of their paying school fees, it was needful, in special cases, to feed and clothe many of them, and, for some, even to provide dormitories, to enable them to attend school of any kind.

2. Because it was found that there were large numbers of children, belonging to parents who, although able to pay a small school fee, were so self-indulgent or degraded as not to have the least regard for their offspring, either for time or eternity.

The Committee of the Union knew from the experience of Sunday Schools, as commenced by Raikes in Gloucester, and of British Schools, as founded by Lancaster in Southwark, that the

tendency of educational efforts commenced for the poorest class is to rise above that class, and leave the poorest to be again a neglected section of society. To keep Ragged Schools to the level for which they were originated, the entire services of two gentlemen were engaged as School Agents, whose special duties were—

1. To keep the schools to the class for which they were established.

2. To render the schools efficient, and to extend their operations.

These duties the Committee believe have, as far as circumstances would allow, been faithfully discharged for over a quarter of a century.

These schools have never sought to compete with other schools, but simply to meet an acknowledged want. They have ever been considered, so far as the Day Schools were concerned, only as tentative, to be superseded in due time by some more effective and permanent arrangement. It must never be forgotten that the primary object of these schools was to bring the Gospel to bear on the neglected outcasts of society. The secondary object was, by means of secular education, in addition to all the social, moral, and religious efforts, to fit the scholars, of all ages, for a life of usefulness and respectability, either at home or abroad.

It is clear from the passing of the Education Act, the establishment of School Boards, and the national interest now taken in primary education, that the time has come when there ought to be a revision of the work, plans, and objects of the Ragged School Union, so that the Society may adapt itself to the new exigencies of the times.

Soon after the formation of the London School Board, several efforts were made by local managers to transfer some of the principal Day Ragged Schools to the Board, from a fear, amounting almost to a panic, that voluntary contributions would be at once withdrawn, and thus to them there seemed no other alternative than to close the school. In other cases the transfer to the Board was desired by the local managers from preference, arising from a conviction that the Board, with its compulsory powers, could give a secular education more effectively than they could. For the Board had power not only to compel attendance, but—

1. To levy rates for school purposes, and

2. To acquire sites for schools wherever wanted or wished.

With these powers, it would be sad indeed if the whole poor

juvenile population were not shortly at work either in Denominational or Board Schools. It is, however clear that Denominational Schools are not likely to do the work of Ragged Schools, and the Board Schools can only undertake the secular teaching. *The religious, moral, and social work that has always been the primary object of the Ragged School,* must either be continued under the auspices of the Ragged School Union, or some similar voluntary association, or be abandoned.

The Committee of the Union have had these matters under consideration, and they are of opinion that with justice and propriety they cannot abandon the work that, in conjunction with Lord Shaftesbury, was inaugurated thirty years since, and which for more than a quarter of a century has been so successfully carried on in the metropolis. The example thus set has been adopted with marked success, not only in the great towns and cities of Britain and her Colonies, but in almost all the capitals of the world.

The Secular work of the Society will in the future probably become less as the School Boards extend their now confessedly difficult operations; and while the opinion prevails that the Day Schools of the Society will be gradually absorbed by the School Boards, it must not be forgotten that the migratory and generally lawless character of the very lowest of the population will for a time at least make the work of Elementary Education on their behalf by the School Board of London one of no small difficulty. It is imperative, therefore, that the Committee should still continue this necessary but at the same time onerous and expensive portion of their operations by giving increased aid to the Managers of the various Day and Evening Schools with whom they are still likely to be identified, nor will they relax any efforts in developing that Evangelical Gospel teaching so successful in the past, and so urgently necessary for the future. They propose still further to extend and support the various operations with which the public have long been familiar, such as Ragged Sunday Schools, Penny Banks, Bands of Hope, Clothing Clubs, Mothers' Meetings, Evening Classes, &c., and to encourage and aid such other efforts as are likely to promote the social, moral, and spiritual well-being of the still neglected masses of the population, including Infant Nurseries, Labourers' Clubs, Ragged Churches and Children's Services, Medical and Gospel Missions, Parents' Lectures, &c., and to continue the Annual Prizes for Good Conduct so long given to boys

and girls remaining in their situations for twelve months and upwards with satisfaction to their employers.

With such like operations, the Committee hope to remedy in some measure the unavoidably defective character of the religious teaching in the Board Schools. If needful, the Committee will not hesitate to employ both males and females as paid agents to carry out this great work; but at first they will see what can be done by the 3,000 voluntary helpers who in long succession have been found so faithful and so effective.

The Committee feel certain that to carry out this work as is required they cannot afford to lose one of their present Subscribers. They will need the help of all, and most sincerely do they hope that it will not only be continued, but that fresh friends will come forward with personal service and pecuniary support.

They have not thought it necessary to allude to any recent statements in depreciation of their past efforts: they are content to leave the history of their operations to the judgment and candour of the public.

In no spirit of boasting, but in humble dependence upon the Divine Arm, and guided by heavenly direction, they desire to go forward in their loved work of Christian Philanthropy, and with a desire faithfully to report work done, and as an incentive to further action, they will from time to time submit their labours to their supporters and fellow-helpers, that they may be revised and improved as required by time or circumstances.

SHAFTESBURY, *Chairman.*

WORDS OF CHEER.

BY THE REV. T. L. CUYLER, D.D.

MANY a pastor and many a parent and Sabbath School teacher grows disheartened from the failure to reap *immediate* results from their labours. They have sown the seed, and yet they reap no harvest, except the pleasant satisfaction of having done their duty. Now what does God promise?

Be not weary in well-doing, for in *due season* "ye shall reap, if ye faint not." The due season is God's own time—not ours. All the discouragement arises from impatience and improper haste to witness results. But God has no years in His existence. It is all to Him an everlasting *now*. His "due season" may come after many years to us—yea! after many generations.

For example, a praying mother sows the seed of gospel-truth in the mellow heart of her dear boy. The boy becomes a man, without showing

even a blossom of true piety. On the contrary, his heart is dead in sin. "The dust has grown into hardness, and the clods cleave fast together." But, within that hard heart, the dormant seed yet lurks, even as grains of corn hidden in the Egyptian pyramids centuries ago still have the germ of life within them. At length that seed is reached. The good mother has lived to old age, and has died without seeing the harvest. But when the rank grass has long waved over that mother's tomb, that son, in mature manhood, has bowed his proud neck to the gentle "yoke," and given his heart to Jesus. The "due season" has not come to that faithful sower until she has got home to heaven; the joy of her darling son's conversion gives a new thrill to her halleluiah-song of praise.

Sometimes, too, the seed sown by one hand is reaped by another. An earnest pastor toils on through the pulpit and the fireside labours of many a year. He sows beside all waters. A few sheaves he brings in with gratitude and joy. But so much of his seed seems lost that he almost fears that his life was wasted, and he goes up from his dying-bed to his Master with some shadow of discouragement on his soul. Has he laboured for naught?

Wait a little and see. His successor comes, and truth from new lips falls upon that congregation. In the "due season" the Holy Spirit descends upon them. Seed long dormant, seed sown by the departed pastor, springs up, and the rustling of ripe grain is heard by angel-ears. A revival comes. Shocks of corn stand full and golden on the spiritual field. Whose is the harvest? Certainly it belongs, under God, to both. The first pastor dropped the gospel-seed; his successor watered it; God brought it to maturity. Herein is that saying fulfilled, "One soweth and another reapeth; but he that soweth and he that reapeth shall rejoice together." A large number of those whom every pastor receives into the church have received their first religious impressions, or have been converted, under another's labours.

I could give scores of historical illustrations of the truth before us. Stephen's teachings and Stephen's prayers ripened into results long after his martyr-death. Paul is leading thousands to Christ to-day. Humbler men have had the same experience of reaping long after the seed was dropped.

A zealous Christian was entering, one Sabbath morning, the vestibule of his church in Glasgow. He notices two noisy vagabond youths, who pass along the pavement with boisterous merriment. He stops them, and after much entreaty, prevails on one of them to go in. At the close of the service he hands the young stranger a Bible from his pew, and sees him no more. Some years afterwards he visits one of the West India islands, goes to a church there, and is accosted by a gentleman who sits near him. He eyes him closely. At length he recognises a resemblance to the face he once brought into his pew at home. The gentleman asks his name: and with much emotion inquires, "Do you not remember a vile Sabbath-breaker whom you once invited into Dr. B.'s church at Glasgow? I am that man. I am now a missionary in this island! The bread you then cast on the waters has been found after many days."

Fellow-labourers for Christ! teachers, pastors, temperance reformers! be of good cheer. Fling unbelief to the winds. We are not responsible for results. We are *only responsible for our duty*. Have we done that? Are we doing it? The military lesson taught by General Grant before Richmond is the same lesson that we need in moral welfare. Let us *fight it out* on that same line if it takes all the summers of a lifetime. Let us not be weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not. Sow on! Sow in faith. Steep the seed in prayer. Sow in tears, and you shall yet reap in joy.

WENTWORTH STREET RAGGED SCHOOL, SPITALFIELDS.

NIGH fourteen years have elapsed since a Ragged School was planted in the very heart of the Jews' quarter, Wentworth Street, Spitalfields. There any visitor to this part of the Far East finds himself surrounded by men, women, and children, all of whom bear that unextinguishable facial expression of the sons of Abraham which we can trace back as far as the monuments of Egypt. Many of these, especially those from Poland and Russia, wear the national gaberdine. There we can hear the dialects of almost every nation under the sun. This is noticeably the case in that "old clo" mart, Petticoat Lane; for, what with French, and German, and Spanish, and Italian, and even Arabic—all uttered in thick or guttural tones—we find ourselves in a very modern Babel, without having a travel to the shores of the Euphrates. Not a few of the fascias of shops have inscriptions in the characters of the "holy tongue;" whilst texts from the Pentateuch on the door-posts are a living witness that the sacred books are not yet dead, in spite of the ravages of that worst form of modern infidelity—German Neology.

It is in this spot, then—the very Jerusalem of London—that the evangelists attached either to the British Jews' Society or to the London City Mission, have proclaimed the gospel for the past thirty years. Some of the most able are of Hebrew extraction. They, of course, labour chiefly amongst adults, many of whom have found Jesus to be the Messiah foretold by their great prophets Moses, Isaiah, and Daniel.

Until, however, the Wentworth Street Ragged School was opened, that most interesting class, the youthful Hebrews, were, if not overlooked, only regarded incidentally by missionaries. For, though this Ragged School was not opened primarily for young Jews, yet large numbers flocked into it from the first, especially on Sunday evenings. This fact is confirmed by the following extract from an article in the organ of Rabbinism, the *Jewish Chronicle*:—

"Some time ago we referred in our columns to a report that had been issued by the Wentworth Street Ragged School, wherein it was mentioned that as many as 300 Jewish children were in the habit of attending there on Sunday evenings. The excuse that was made by the children and their parents—a very lame one, it is true—was to the effect that there existed no

Jewish school which the children could attend on Sunday evenings, which with most of them constituted their only leisure evening."

This fact stirred up the wealthier Jews—who, to their praise be it said, never forget their poorer brethren—to start a Sunday Night School. Hence this article proceeds to intimate that "it is gratifying to state that as soon as this came under the notice of our religious authorities, energetic steps were taken by them to put a stop to this practice of sending children to schools where a faith foreign to their own was being taught them, and to supply the want which was existing in our community. The Baroness de Rothschild, with her warm-hearted zeal for the welfare of the poor, had her adult school in Wood Street, Spitalfields, opened for the boys, who, being at work the whole week, are prevented attending any day school or evening school during week days. An average of about 100 attend there on Sunday evenings, where some religious and secular instruction is imparted to them. The Committee of the Infant School have kindly allowed their premises to be used as a school for girls. The teaching is imparted by several ladies and gentlemen, who have kindly volunteered their valuable services, and some of whom come from the far west of the metropolis in order to assist in this labour of love. To show how attractive the instruction is to the children it need only be mentioned that while at the commencement of the year only thirty-five children attended, their number amounts now to about 250. The pupils are of the humblest classes, work-girls and others, and their ages vary from eight to eighteen. They meet every Sunday from six till nine p.m. 'They receive such instruction as they may require both in English and Hebrew, and when the classes are over they all assemble in the large schoolroom, where they are addressed by one and another of our ministers.'"

We need scarcely say that the Wentworth Street School embraces all the usual machinery hitherto found so successful in Ragged Schools at home and abroad. Thus there are Sunday Schools attended by 140 scholars, which might be largely increased were there more teachers. The Day Schools average 90. The larger number of these are the offspring of professional beggars, hawkers, "renovators, and deputies." We beg to explain the meaning of the words "renovators" and "deputies." The "renovators" are menders of old boots and clothes, who get their living by selling these articles; "deputies" are the managers of lodging-houses, or, in other words, of thieves' kitchens. As regards their mental powers, the children are, on the whole, superior to those who frequent middle-class schools; but unfortunately, the cleverest boys seem almost in every case to become professional thieves. As may be supposed, the parents are in general drunkards and grossly immoral, and they do all in their power to prevent the children from attending school, in order to make them pick up a few pence by begging, or selling matches. The example of the parents seems to have an effect on the tastes of the youngest children, as it is found that even these, if they have a few pence, will spend them in drink. One child, six years old, is often sent out by his parents to sell matches, and, if he does not bring back eightpence by 10 p.m., is severely beaten, and left in the street all night. This child has been twice taken up by the police and sent to Homerton

Union, but has been immediately claimed by his relatives, who do not like to lose with him the means of procuring drink. Such children seldom have any food given them by their parents, and are, therefore, driven to stealing, in order to satisfy their hunger. We are glad to report that one girl has, however, been rescued and sent out to service; and that two boys, handed over to Miss McPherson and sent to Canada, leaving behind a father who can only be so named in a legal sense, for he treated them with a cruelty which would hardly be credited were the details of it related. The Girls' Night School is also in a prosperous state, many grown-up girls attending it, to learn to read, write, &c., and also to receive instruction in sewing. The average attendance is thirty. Three girls, who have left the school and are now at service, received prizes last year from the Ragged School Union for good conduct. At the Boys' Night School the average attendance is about sixty; their ages vary from twelve to eighteen. All these boys are engaged during the day in earning their living. Some of them, when they first come, do not even know the alphabet, and few of them can read. As no better plan has been devised to show the duty of saving against "a rainy day" than the Penny Bank, we are glad to find that the Penny Bank attached to this school is increasing in favour, which is shown by the fact that the number of depositors amounts to 250. The sum paid in last year was £142 4s. 8d., of which £75 8s. 9d. was withdrawn during the year; of the residue, which was paid out at Christmas, we gladly report that almost every penny was spent by the poor people in buying clothing, food, and coals. Nor have adults been neglected. Sewing Classes were held during the winter, three times a week, under the auspices of the East London Mission, and were attended on the average by eighty women. They were opened with prayer, and closed with a short religious service. Many women were taught the use of their needle, and also for the first time heard the gospel of the true Messiah. The Mothers' Meeting is also useful in benefiting the poor, and is held every Wednesday evening. The average attendance is about fifty. In addition to these social operations, Mission Services are held in the evening on week days and Sundays, and have been well attended. They have, like all similar services, been productive of much good, and have been the means of rescuing several abandoned characters.

Our sketch would be incomplete did we not intimate that the bulk of the managers live at Dalston, some two miles from the school. The funds, too, are chiefly raised there. So that the Wentworth Street Ragged School may be regarded as the "territorial mission" of Dalston. It is only, indeed, by such distant aid that the miles of vice and misery of the Far East can be reached or evangelised. But when men thus practically show that they believe the truth that Christ died for both Jew and Gentile, and that the same blood can cleanse the poor east as much as the rich west—this fact speaks powerfully to districts which are immersed in a moral darkness "which may be felt."

In Memoriam.

MISS MARGARET LLOYD.
MR. ROBERT HARDY.
MR. WILLIAM EARTHY.

DEATH has been very busy amongst our ranks of late. For able teachers have been "gathered one by one" to their Father's house, but not one moment before they had finished their Master's work. Each has left the rich legacy of a well-spent life; for we believe that they *lived* Christ as well as worked earnestly for their common Lord. Above all, they have bequeathed a lesson to all who are still privileged to labour in Christ's vineyard—never defer this day's work till to-morrow. At the same time, these events seem to speak as with bugle-call to all indolent Christians—if such there can possibly be—"Why stand *ye* all the day idle?"

The first faithful worker whose death we have to record is that of Miss MARGARET LLOYD, whose independent means enabled her to devote her entire time to Christ's work. A fellow-labourer in the same Ragged School gives the following sketch of her character, which rather *under*-rates than exaggerates her merits. "E. E. A." says that "on the 30th September last there passed away from earth to heaven a teacher greatly honoured and loved in the Bell Alley Ragged School, London Wall, City. This lady, Miss Margaret Lloyd, had for seventeen years devoted herself to work for our Lord amongst the poor in that neighbourhood. She was of a singularly retiring and unostentatious spirit. Whilst all days and all weathers witnessed her untiring sacrifice of self, she could not bear, and would scarcely permit, any public notice of her labours. Loving but firm, weakly but untiring, our friend ministered to the children and to their parents as a true disciple of Jesus only could do. Supported by the other teachers, and by the Committee, the various agencies of the school yet grouped themselves round Miss Lloyd in a manner that was unmistakable.

It might scarcely be thought that there was need for a Ragged School in the City of London, but the work was found in plenty, and *the Worker*. The parents were helped, taught, comforted. The children year after year found the same patient and Christ-like teacher. The friends with whom she worked had in her an example of faith and love. Miss Lloyd had a notable faculty and practice of individualising her instructions. She did not deal with her scholars as by the dozen; but with each one, as the opportunity came, and over and over again would she hold a prayerful intercourse —soul with soul.

This work, as might be expected, has not been without much blessed fruit. There are many young people rising to the duties and cares of life who will cherish her memory and her instructions gratefully all their days. And some of the scholars have died leaving to their teacher the joyful hope that they had found through her the pearl of great price.

During a long illness, accompanied by very severe suffering, Miss Lloyd would persevere in spite of pain and weakness in fairly dragging herself to the school to meet 'her girls.' When at length she could do this no more, even amidst the wanderings occasioned by extreme suffering her expressions showed her heart to be with them still. And so she went to the land that is very far off, and 'to see the King in his beauty.' She 'rests from her labours and her works do follow her.'

This brief notice, *in memoriam*, is communicated by her sorrowing companions in the work. So sweet a disposition, such strength in weakness, such self-denying toil, such humility and zeal as Miss Lloyd, through the grace given to her, was enabled to manifest—these are noteworthy even amongst the devoted labourers in our Ragged Schools. Should these lines stimulate any fainting soul to take new courage in the service of Him who died for us, then it will be true that this dear servant of Christ, *though dead, yet speaketh.*"

The next teacher who passed away to his eternal rest was Mr. ROBERT HARDY. One of the oldest of the paid staff, he won the confidence of all with whom he came in contact by his consistent piety, great ability, and Christian courtesy. Like many more of his fellow-workers, he was no hireling, but was "in labours abundant," and feared neither fever-den nor thieves' hovel when engaged in his Master's work.

Of Mr. Hardy the Secretary of the Dove Row Ragged School, where he laboured so long and so well, thus writes:—"Mr. Robert Hardy, who died on the 4th of November, was fifty-two years of age. When I first knew him he was helping the late Mr. Jenkins in Nichol Street Ragged Schools. He was the paid teacher of Dove Row Ragged School for about twelve years, during which time he was also the superintendent of the Sunday School, morning, afternoon, and evening.

He was the principal cause of a small mission church being formed in connection with the school, and a building for worship being erected. The last few years this place of worship did not do so well as he desired, and this seemed much to affect him. His work did not seem before to be any burden to him, but after the anxiety about this place of worship he was unable to continue his ordinary duties, and had to leave about two years back. His whole heart seemed to be in his work, and his fault was (if we may call it a fault) in trying to do too much. 'But now he has gone to his rest, to be for ever blessed' (Rev. xiv. 13).

He had correspondence with many of the old scholars, and heard from them from all parts. One I remember him telling me of from China, who wrote, among other things, of the value to him of the Bible that he had received from the Dove Row School."

Mr. WILLIAM EARTHY, who died on Sunday, November 3rd, was only known to a limited circle, but he was not less earnest than the two preceding teachers. Though upwards of seventy when he was called home, he steadily laboured at Field Lane until early last year, when an agonising internal disorder laid him aside. For above eighteen years he steadily

taught at Field Lane; but before that he superintended Brook Street Ragged School for some years—so that he had laboured about a quarter of a century in Ragged Schools. A man of much natural and acquired talent all his powers were consecrated by an intense love of souls based on love to Christ. The younger teachers especially regarded him with great affection, for he was always ready to give them advice and to sympathise with their many trials as teachers. Like his life, his end was peace, for he ever echoed the dying language of Lady Shaftesbury, "None but Christ, none but Christ."

Thus may it be said of our departed friends, as we trust that it will be said of all Ragged School teachers when their life work is over—

"They are gathering homeward from every land,
One by one.
As their weary feet touch the shining strand,
One by one.
Their brows are enclosed in a golden crown,
Their travail-stained garments are all laid down,
And clothed in white raiment, they rest on the mead,
Where the Lamb loveth his children to lead,
One by one.
Before they rest, they pass through the strife,
One by one.
Through the waters of death they enter life,
One by one.
To some are the floods of the river still,
As they ford on the way to the heavenly hill;
To others, the waves run fiercely wild:
Yet all reach the home of the undefiled,
One by one."

ABOUT THE LONDON WATERCRESS SELLERS.

It has always seemed strange to me that in this great city of charity, so full of earnest and benevolent Christians, who seem ceaselessly to be going about doing good, some having found their labour and pleasure in hospitals, orphan asylums, or in seeking to reclaim the thief and harlot,—yet all seemed to have passed over the case of the cress-sellers, perhaps without a thought of their true condition, certainly without any having offered the helping hand, the word of sympathy, or given that wholesome counsel and advice so much needed and thankfully accepted. Surely the kindly disposed have picked out some few strong Irish girls, whom they may have seen selling watercresses, and have without a second thought considered them all as being unworthy of help or sympathy, forgetting the many poor cripples who sit at the street corners selling cress, the little children, the poor and the aged, who pass our door day after day, crying out "watercresses," often unheeded by us. Listen to the different tones of voices crying for sale this wholesome article, or better, call one of them to your door, ask

them kindly a few questions, and you will doubtless hear a tale of misery such as you thought could not be found in England.

Too many have thought it a very easy and profitable mode of livelihood, but, believe me, you are mistaken. Would you test it? Follow one of the poor creatures on their round, reckon that one half or even two thirds of their takings are profit, and then what have they earned, how far do they walk, how many times do they cry their wares before they take threepence? I know some do not earn sixpence a day the week through, and for this they must be very early at the market, travel the streets some hours during the morning and afternoon, and when they have sold out (which is not always the case) perhaps go home to a sick husband, and spend, as only a poor loving wife knows how to spend, the few halfpence profit to the best advantage. It is marvellous how these poor creatures live, for at most the relief they may have from the Union will not more than cover the rent: some whom I know cannot live, they are dying inch by inch of want and starvation. "Why not go into the workhouse?" say some. Surely, friend, those who will thus struggle to earn an honest crust, and will undergo such privations as these to avoid it, should have the helping hand offered to them, especially when we know that their dread of the House arises from the fact that it is not a Union, but a place where husband and wife are parted, and life has lost, even for such, all that makes life endurable here below.

Of the many London hawkers, the case of the cress-seller is doubtless the most deplorable, their earnings being so small: it is simply those who are unable to get enough capital to buy more profitable articles that engage in the cress trade. The very fact that only a sum of from threepence to one shilling is required to commence with, will show that it is the very poorest who fly to this in the hope of earning food, their takings being also proportionally small. The little children are sent out to earn their mite to add to the daily store; thus so many of the little children, the aged and infirm, are seen sitting at the corners of the streets, the trade being almost left in their hands, except just at the commencement of the season.

Their trials are considerably increased from the fact that watercress is only saleable for about five or six months in the year: beginning about the end of February, it flourishes until the end of May, when it gradually begins to fail; the cress gets large and stalky, soon begins to go to seed, and also gets scarce. Bloaters and other cheap relishes then come in season and supersede the cress, and those poor creatures who have not the means to raise money to buy the more seasonable articles, are reduced to the lowest state of distress; some, as the winter draws on, are compelled to seek the rude shelter of the Union, while others try with a few apples, oranges, or nuts, to hold out through the winter. Let me give briefly an account of some two or three of those I have visited and known, for the accuracy and genuineness of which I can vouch:—

Mrs. R——, one of the poor creatures who came to a Watercress Sellers' Tea Meeting, with a more than usually dejected look; sorrow and want were stamped upon her brow, that at once we sought to enquire into her case. We found she lived in a little wretched room in Plum Tree Court,

and hither we went to see her, and surely no room in "St. Giles's" or the "East End" could furnish a scene of greater misery and distress than met our gaze here. Words would fail me to express the state her sick husband was in; truly he was but skin and bone, ill of consumption, brought on through want and starvation. He lay dying, his bones really came through his skin; dying inch by inch of hunger, no one had been to see him, no one to give him food, for the want of which he was now dying. Two little children were also there, in an almost naked state, neglected and left, while the poor woman went out selling a few flowers and watercresses, trying thus to keep her husband and children alive. I cannot describe the joy of the dear ones when, through the kindness of friends, we gave arrowroot, wine, and a little beef-tea, to the sick man, bread, and a few articles of clothing. He was removed to the infirmary, where he died a few days after—died, I am sure, through want and neglect, starved in spite of the poor wife's struggle and battle for bread. Now left a widow, she still struggles by selling watercress, &c., in the street, to keep herself and her two little ones out of the workhouse; weak and sickly herself, she could not do charing even if it could be procured.

A poor aged man passes my house day after day, crying with a feeble voice, "Watercress, fresh watercress." Never have I seen more than three or four pennyworth of cress in his basket at one time. Weak and aged, he cannot walk far, so that his opportunity for sale is small, and many people seeing his small stock won't buy, thinking perhaps they are not fresh. I know for a certain fact that this poor man does not earn on an average threepence a day: he has an ailing wife, who is entirely unable to assist him in the struggle for bread: their parish relief scarcely covers the rent. I have met him returning home, sold out, and with but threepence in his possession; with tears in his eyes he said, "Sir, I and my wife have not had anything to eat to-day. I must spend this, all I have got, to get a bit of bread, and tea and sugar. I really don't know what to do." I have known him when brought low like this, to go home, his wife will wash his shirt, pawn it, and with the money buy more cress, and again start in the search for bread.

Having thus given a brief outline of the life and struggles of the poor watercress seller, it behoves me now to give briefly an outline of the object of a mission which has been formed under the presidency of the Earl of Shaftesbury in Laystall Street, Clerkenwell. It is impossible for me to give a true idea of their spiritual condition; it is dark in the extreme, labouring harder upon the Sabbath than any other day through the week. They seldom have the opportunity of going to church or chapel, differing from the usual class of "costers," who never work after one o'clock on Sunday: it is six or seven ere they reach their homes, and then, tired with labour, they seldom are found with a desire to go to a place of worship.

We, therefore, by district visiting, strive to meet them, to counsel, aid, and sympathise with them. Being a class of people buying, selling, and living by themselves, our work among them is necessarily of an extended nature, though nearly all the cress sold in London streets is bought at Farringdon Market. They have no settled time to go to purchase, the

time varying from five in the morning until six in the evening. There is not any market in London where more than five or six watercress sellers are seen; divided throughout London, sitting by themselves, and going their rounds alone, it necessarily follows that to meet them, to speak with them, we have to travel throughout London, search for them in the streets, in the markets, or at their stalls. This is being done, and thus these poor creatures, who could not be reached by ordinary Christian Missions, have now had the gospel brought nigh unto them. Efforts are also made to induce them to attend the nearest Christian Mission to where they reside.

In connection with this Mission there has been formed a Society of Watercress, Flower and Fruit Sellers, who abstain from buying or selling upon the Lord's day. Many have already given up Sunday trading, and at our Sunday Services are now to be seen those who formerly engaged in their calling upon the Lord's day. A loan fund has been formed, so that when any of their number are so reduced as to be without money with which to go to market, they may be able to borrow a small sum and to start afresh. Such a fund is especially needed when cresses fail and a larger capital is required to buy apples or oranges to sell in the winter, and thus help them to avoid the object of dread, viz., the workhouse.

Those who have seen the aged going their round upon the hot summer afternoons, seen them with their basket of cress, must have pitied them, struggling onward, or seeing those at street corners with their cress upon an old tea board, or an old hamper lid turned upside down, will rejoice to learn that a Basket, Stall, and Barrow Club has been opened. A strong basket, a neat and clean stall, or small barrow which answers both for the purpose of a stall and to wheel round the street, can now be borrowed for a trifle a week by the most deserving and needful cress-sellers. The club being formed upon the hire system, the barrow or stall becomes their own property in time; thus, without arduous labour to the aged and cripples, a greater sale is effected, people being induced to buy.

We are also endeavouring, in special cases, such as in the case of poor widows with a family, or where there may be sickness at home, to provide needlework for them to do while they sit at their stalls, and thus help them to earn extra that is so greatly needed in such cases. This is to be worked in connection with the Clothing Club, in which they are encouraged to purchase necessary articles of clothing, one penny being added to each shilling paid into the club by the poor.

By the opening of an Evening School Sewing Class, for the instruction of those engaged all day in the streets—to bring them directly into the benefit of the Penny Bank, Soup Kitchen, Destitute Children's Dinners, &c.—we trust by these and similar means put forth, to assist them onward, and show a practical sympathy with them, giving unto them some speck of light in their otherwise dark and cheerless life. Soon we trust to see them enjoying their Sabbath as a day of rest, entering a place of worship, their lives brighter, and their faces free from that dejected and despairing look that is now stamped upon them.

8, *Sekforde Street, Clerkenwell.* JOHN A. GROOM.

INNOCENT FAI, THE CARMAN OF PORT ROYAL.

ONE of the carters of Port Royal, named Innocent Fai, used always to eat the bran bread made for the dogs in order to give his own portion to the poor. Being possessed of a little piece of land, he sold it for four hundred livres, one hundred of which he gave to deliver a prisoner, and the remaining three hundred he gave out to poor families in weekly allowances. One piece of land he kept in corn, which, after his work was over, he used to thresh out himself; his friend the miller of Port Royal having ground it, and his sister baked it, he gave it to the poor, as well as his wages, which he laid out in clothes for them. Perceiving his charities were spoken of, he begged a friend to distribute them in his own name; but he refusing to give them as his own, he then begged the nuns of Port Royal to keep his wages and let them be distributed among the charities of the house.

Whenever his work was done he used to go into the stable, and, shutting the door, spend his leisure in prayer, pretending, if any one came in and surprised him kneeling, to look for something, as though he had dropped it in the litter between the horses. He also used to be very diligent in reading Scripture; and the nuns having given him a room of his own, with a key, he used to shut himself up there and copy out passages of Scripture, that he might learn them by heart. These he repeated as he pursued his daily labours, and they formed the subject of his conversation with his fellow-servants and with the poor.

He always went very thinly clad, and literally fulfilled the precept, "Let him that hath two coats impart to him that hath none." One winter he passed without shoes and stockings, having spent all his money, and having stripped himself of them to give to a poor old woman whom he saw as he was working out of doors. A gentleman one day seeing him in this condition told him "he was a great fool," and asked him "where he had learnt to strip himself in this manner." He replied, "In the Bible." "You are an ignorant, stupid fellow," returned the gentleman, "and misunderstand it. You are the first poor person for whom you should keep your little property, and not leave yourself to die like a dog on a dunghill in your old age, and to starve for want." "Sir," returned Innocent Fai, with great animation, "it is not wealth that can supply our real wants, but Providence; and if we do not submit our desires to Him, we may, in the midst of wealth, not only suffer from real wants, but be tormented by the multitude of factitious ones. Death will come, and when it does come the conscience would be more tormented by superfluity than the body by want."

M. Angelica, of St. John, who traces the character of Innocent Fai in the *Necrologe de Port Royal*, adds: "It is remarkable that Innocent Fai died just one fortnight after this conversation, having not one penny in his pocket, but assisted by the best advice of the six first physicians in France; nursed, not by hirelings, but by the recluses of Port Royal—men whose education was in courts, whose names on earth were among the princes of the land, and in heaven who were enrolled amongst the saints. His

funeral was attended with honour by a large community, whose numbers and whose names were equally calculated to bestow religious or wordly respect on his remains. It is equally remarkable that the gentleman who gave him advice lived a long and worldly life; he died in a noble mansion-house, situated in his own magnificent grounds, in a splendid room, on a bed of down. But his family had flown from the scene of sickness. The tardy footsteps of the often-called, and often vainly expected, hireling alone broke the drear solitude of his empty palace, and the physician pronounced his doom to the indifferent ears of strangers. Then he found that the hand of unattached servitude, which alone relieves the wants of the ungodly rich, is colder than that with which casual charity relieves the poor. But whether he died the death of the just his nearest relatives did not leave their scenes of dissipation to inquire.—*Schimmelpenninck's Tour to Alêt.*

DEATH OF LADY CONSTANCE ASHLEY.

We are grieved to intimate that Lord Shaftesbury has been called to suffer another severe blow. Scarcely is the ink dry with which we recorded the death of Lady Shaftesbury than we are called to report the death of his second daughter, Lady Constance, who expired at Mentone on Dec. 16th ult.

The *Record* says that Lady Constance has been an invalid for several years, and when she lost the devoted mother whose maternal solicitude and unwearied watchfulness could never be surpassed, it was hardly hoped that she would have survived a week. The most eminent medical advice declared that she could not live over the month of November in London, and therefore, attended by an eminent medical practitioner, she was once more conveyed to the shores of the Mediterranean, beneath the shelter of those rocks which shut out the northern blasts, and where on former occasions she had found the bright sunshine of summer in the depths of winter. But recovery was in truth hopeless, and after spending six weeks of anxiety, only relieved by brief intervals of treacherous hope, Lord Shaftesbury was called to return to England, bearing with him the lifeless remains, that they might be placed in the family vault at St. Giles, in Dorsetshire.

Like her sister, Lady Constance sympathised deeply with the wants and woes of the poor. Thus on many occasions they gave a tea-party to different Ragged Schools, east and west, at their own expense. On these festive days they invariably presided, and won the hearts of all by their *un*-patronising kindness.

Of Lady Constance's character as a Christian the noble Earl thus writes to us:—"Such a pure, gentle, loving spirit! such a faith in the blessed Lord! Her death was, like her life, radiant with joy in Christ, and Christ only. I never saw such a departure."

Need we ask the prayers of our readers that Lord Shaftesbury may be sustained in this hour of heavy trial? and ought it not to be another of those lessons which we are so slow to learn—never to defer the work of to-day till to-morrow?

Poet's Corner.

ABIDING GIFTS.

"Now *abideth*, Faith, Hope, Love—these three; but the greatest of these is Love."—1 Cor. xiii. 13.

THERE are three lessons I would write,
Three words as with a burning pen,
In tracings of eternal light,
Upon the hearts of men.

Have Faith! where'er thy bark is driven—
The calm's disport, the tempest's mirth:
Know this, God rules the hosts of heaven
And the inhabitants of earth.

Have Hope! though clouds environ round
And Gladness hides her face in scorn;
Put thou the shadow from thy brow—
For midnight has its morn.

Have Love! not love alone for one,
But man, as man, thy brother call,
And scatter like the circling sun
Thy charities on all.

Thus grave these lessons on thy soul,
Faith, Hope, and Love; and thou shalt find
Strength when life's surges rudest roll,—
Light where thou else wert blind.

FROM SCHILLER.

Teachers' Column.

MISSION TEACHERS AT WORK.

BY THE REV. ALEXANDER WHYTE.

THE nature and amount of preparation for teaching a class, the teaching itself, and to a great extent the results, will depend on the personal character of the teacher. It is not any or every ordinarily intelligent young man or woman in our congregations who is able or fit to teach even the most elementary class in a mission-school. Indeed, for such work, for which usually any one is thought good enough, more tact, skill, patience, faith, and love are needed than for more advanced classes. But for all teachers of religious truth, the one indispensable thing is a personal experience, more or less defined and clear, of a work of grace in the heart. It is plain that one must have this possession and experience before he can be or will be an intelligent reader or a devout and diligent student of Holy Scripture, such as every teacher ought to be. Divine things must be a frequent and familiar thought to him in daily life, and prayer a spontaneous and growing exercise of soul. For these things are the invariable notes and marks of the presence of God's Spirit

with the soul, and without some evidence that he is graciously with us, we have neither call nor do we possess ability to serve God in teaching children or preaching to men. This is needed above all else; but more is needed than this first and indispensable requisite of personal religion. Natural gifts, intelligence, education, training, in a word, *capacity*, natural and acquired, is needed to successful Sabbath-school teaching.

1. PREPARATION FOR THE CLASS.— In imitation of Demosthenes' oft-quoted advice to a young orator — Action! action! action! so would I say to all teachers, Preparation! preparation! preparation! To one and all who teach, whether their work is among their own children or among the children of others, I would say with all my might, Learn before you go to teach! Be students of your Bibles and of religious truth! Set your own mind to work before you pretend to go to awaken, to interest, to feed the minds of others, ay, even of little children. Let their lesson for next Sabbath be your lesson and study and meditation all the week. Get the next lesson, biblical or catechetical, into your mind after you go home from dictating it to your class on Sabbath evening; carry it about with you all the week; let it come up at spare and unoccupied moments; let it be like a magnet in your mind, drawing to itself illustrations from life, observation, reading, and Scripture. Above all things, feed upon it yourself; let it mingle with the substance and very wording of your daily prayers; let its phrases and turns of expression become thoroughly familiar to you.

2. ACTUAL TEACHING. — The true, useful, hopeful teacher must come to his class *from* prayer and *in* prayer. This consecrates all preparation, and makes the spirit both keen and tender in dealing with the truths of Holy Scripture and the hearts of children. Have the spirit of him always with you who feared his work and cried, "Unless Thy presence go with me, carry me not up hence!" And the more unpromising and unfruitful your work is, be the more urgent in some such prayer and supplication. In commencing to teach a class, having yourself mastered the lessons all through from introduction to application, begin at the beginning. Is your subject a Scripture incident? Set forth its circumstances—the time, the place, the people, the purpose, &c. If it is a consecutive course, invariably connect with what has gone before. Get an answer or two to questions about last lesson on the previous context; then proceed to open up and apply the meaning, import, and bearing of the subject in hand. During lesson-time watch the child's mind, ascertain where it is, and what it is interested in. Follow that up, and once you have got a hold of the mind, do not suffer it to slip out of your hand. Do not overload nor overstrain, but at the same time do not undervalue and underfeed the opening and hungry mind. Far better aim too high than too low in teaching the young mind. If it is in your own hand to select the lessons, make judicious selection of the passages to be read and explained. And specially in the passages that are to be committed to memory consult the imagination, the understanding, the heart in your selection. See that the passages and texts are committed correctly, and in no case pass on from a memory-lesson without making clear and plain the meaning of the words that have been put into the mind. Never close the class without a few pointed, direct, *premeditated* words, applying what has been taught. But let such words be very few, and the most vivid and pointed you can find.

A mission-school teacher must charge himself with more (3) OVERSIGHT OF THE CHILDREN than mere Sabbath and class-work represents. Visiting is indispensable in home-mission districts; and visiting, in the hands of a wise, earnest, and self-denying teacher, is a means of doing good and spreading good that can-

not be overestimated. The teacher who, for any reason, fails in doing it, is neglecting not only great opportunities of usefulness, but also great sources of stimulus and comfort. If you visit the homes of your scholars, the lessons will be much better prepared, the attendance will be more regular, the esteem and respect of the children, fed on the esteem and respect of the parents, will be vastly increased, and a new sense of responsibility, accompanied by a new source of encouragement and hope, will enter your life.

If teachers were once to get hold of the neglected young, and were to feel and show interest in them as they grow up, giving them counsel and guidance at difficult stages in life, assisting them to get work and such like things, many a young life would pass out of the mission-school into the senior Bible-class, thence into the minister's class, and thence into the membership of the Church, which, for want of a teacher's pastoral solicitous care, falls back into the slough of ignorance and vice from which they were once almost saved.

Besides the direct results of visiting, the indirect are of a most certain and valuable kind. If a teacher is thus visiting a non-church-going family, and seeking to do good to one of the least of its members, the influence of that will penetrate to every heart in the house with unsuspected but real power. The parents will be, they cannot but be, touched and somewhat won by kindness, and attention, and affection shown to their child; and the older brothers and sisters will, in spite of themselves, be softened and drawn a little in the direction of church life and worship. Visiting, in all ranks of society, and after all social changes, is, and will remain, one of the most powerful and telling means of doing good. And he who neglects it or avoids it, when it is at all possible to overtake it, is neglecting a means of grace and comfort to himself, and of ingathering and upbuilding the mission-school and congregation.

MAXIMS FOR TEACHERS.

PROVE in your own experience the salvation you preach to others.

Cry mightily to God for help.

Keep in the path of duty. Go to Nineveh instead of Tarshish.

Remember that all your strength is in the Lord, and that all your success is through his blessing. Remember you are but an earthen vessel.

Remember you must meet your scholars in the judgment. Remember there will be a last time to teach, and a last time to pray, and that *this* may be the last time.

Keep Christ before you and before your class. Do your best every time.

Have something to say. Say it, and stop.

Tell what you know. Omit guesses and opinions.

Make the class understand.

Be *calm;* a cold hammer bends the hot iron.

Be *patient;* gentleness is stronger than rage.

Be *tender;* precious seed is borne with weeping.

Be *faithful;* you must give account to God at last.

Children's Gallery.

WHICH WAS HAPPIEST?

EDITH stood before the mirror, her face and figure reflected in beautiful proportions from its clear surface. There were the wealth of shining brown ringlets curving from the fair forehead beneath, the delicate glow on the rounded cheek, the fine hazel eyes, the full lips

reminding one so bewitchingly of ripe fruit—there they were in the glass, a beautiful copy of the more beautiful original before it. But, alas! the lines of the fair face were contracted with fretful discontent as Edith surveyed the rich dress she was trying on. Truly the robe seemed to adjust itself admirably to her figure's exquisite proportions; but the eye of the spoiled child of fortune, rendered captious by some caprice of ill-humour, had discovered something, either in the arrangement of the trimmings or the setting of the skirts, whereof to complain.

"I meant to have two rows of fringe here, Miss Barton," she said, pettishly, to the pale, patient girl who stood beside her, anxiously hoping her work would be approved. "I can't wear it like this. And how badly it sets just here! I must have it altered. Don't I look a fright in it, mamma? I can't wear it so, can I?"

"My darling Edith," said the fond mother, from the depths of her cushioned chair, "it becomes you as everything does; you look as you always do, my love; do not be put out about a trifle. You could not look better."

"Pshaw, mamma!" said Edith, impatiently.

"I can't wear it so; you must alter it, Miss Barton," and she disrobed herself.

"How fearfully hot it is, mamma!" said Edith, throwing herself on the sofa; "I don't know how to bear myself."

A sad, patient look of disappointment settled down on the pale, thin face of the dressmaker; but without a word of murmuring she quietly made up her bundle again and took her leave.

Again Edith said, "How fearfully hot it is!"

"My dear, take one of those nectarines," said her parent, languidly, "they are very refreshing, my love."

Edith reached her hand to the plate of rich, ripe, hothouse fruit on the table, and took one, but threw it down with a look of satiety after scarcely tasting it, because of a tiny speck on its otherwise soft, rosy skin.

Meanwhile Mary Barton pursued the road towards *her* home in one of the denser parts of the city. A quiet, patient, submissive step had the poor dressmaker as she trod her way along. Near home she passed a fruit-stall; it looked tempting. "It would be so nice for dear Ned," and with a wistful look she seemed to calculate the possibility of affording the purchase of a pear. She was shaking her head and passing on, when the kind woman, who knew something of her, called to her to stop. "Ain't you little Ned Barton's sister? he ain't well, is he? Here, take these for him," giving her an apple and a pear that were just beginning to decay. "They ain't no use to me now, you may just as well have them."

Gratefully Mary accepted the gift and stepped more lightly on. Entering her lodgings, which were in a closely populated part of the city, she ascended the staircase leading to the two small rooms she occupied. In one of these, on an ordinary-looking bed which had been years in wear, lay a child of some three years old in the troubled, restless sleep of fever. Mary went to the bedside, and bent fondly over him. "I am so glad he sleeps; I hope it will do him good. Poor dear little Ned!" and she kissed the little flushed face, then took off her bonnet and shawl, and went into the next apartment. Was it hot in the suburban square? Much more so here in the heart of the crowded city. She threw up the little window to let in a breath of fresh air, but the atmosphere seemed to weigh down in a dense moveless mass, and the only breeze that stirred came up redolent of all disagreeable odours from the gutters and sinks beneath. Kneeling down, Mary pressed her forehead in her hands and leant it against the window-sill. She was tired and worn; her temples were hot and

throbbing, her spirits were depressed, and the home of luxury she had just left, with its spacious rooms, its lazy seats, and above all just then, the tempting juicy fruit on the polished table, was painfully contrasted in her mind with her own situation. Her lot was toil and drudgery; a weak, timid girl, she was friendless and alone; none for her to lean upon—none, save little Ned, to care for her. Her furniture was bare and unadorned, the atmosphere around her oppressive and depressing. "O God, why am I thus?" The rebellious thought was repelled with horror; and just then the least breath of a purer air seemed to blow on the poor girl's forehead. Oh! how refreshing it was! The corners of the mouth that were hopelessly sinking settled more peacefully. Grateful emotions swelled her breast. "Oh, how kind God is! He tries me, certainly, but he helps me too. If he lays a burden on me, he gives me his own strength to bear it. If I have no other friend, yet I have Jesus; and how sweet that is! Oh! God is very kind!"

"Mary! Mary!" her little brother called feebly and restlessly from the adjoining room. In an instant she had glided to his side, and was bending lovingly over him. Then she took the child in her arms, and pressed her cheek against his hot, flushed face.

"I am so hot, Mary!"

"Are you, love?" and she put her hand softly and soothingly on his forehead. "There! is not that nice, Neddy dear?"

"Yes," and the child seemed to enjoy the cool pressure of the hand. But yet the little parched lips opened thirstingly and longingly, and the breath came hot and fevered.

"Some drink!" the child murmured.

"Wouldn't Neddy like a pear; here, love!" and the gift was brought out. How eagerly he took the cool juicy fruit, and how Mary enjoyed the look of satisfaction that overspread his features! Oh, how precious was that fruit, more so to them than all the rich fruit rejected by Edith to her.

"God sent us this fruit, Neddy dear!" said Mary. "Was it not kind of him? Ought we not to say 'Thank you'?" and her own full eyes gazed upward with confiding trust. "He is very good to us."

Reader! thou hast looked on both, the child of fortune and the child of toil. Which was the happiest?

ELLA.

Editor's Note-Book.

TAKE IN THE BOYS.

WORTH more than many a costly charity or ponderous institution, is the gentle Christian hospitality that will keep open something like a home for the lad beginning life in the wilderness of a strange city. Good men and women, do not draw your bar against Sabbath visitors so hard and fast, that you shut out such an one as this. Spare him a corner in your pew and the use of your Sunday bookshelf. Make him brightly welcome too, now and again, of a week-night. Grudge it not, friend, for comfort unshared is like meat unsalted, it will not keep. It was the woman who took in the stranger, whose barrel of meal and cruse of oil wasted not in the time of the famine in Israel. Do not disregard the poor, clumsy, half-grown lad—he may prove a fine man by-and-by, if he is not trodden down while he is in chrysalis. Do not make too sure that "he must have somewhere better to go"—that supposition has left many a poor fellow to a dull evening or a lonely Christmas.

Don't ask him once, and say it is his own fault if he does not choose to come again—for he has generally a great pride and touchiness, and if you are apt sometimes to think him a little in the way, he is apt always to feel himself very much so. I speak feelingly, knowing the heart of a stranger, since I was a stranger myself.—*Sunday Magazine.*

WOMAN'S WORK.

It is generally admitted that there is a work in the field of Christian usefulness which men cannot so well perform. By the beds of the sick and dying, among orphans and neglected children, in the distribution of tracts, in counselling young and inexperienced girls, and wives and mothers, in lifting up their fallen sisters, and rescuing them from lives of shame. Even in speaking kind Christian words to bold, rude men, whom no one could so readily approach, in strengthening in private the impressions made by the public preaching of the word—for services of this character women have, we believe, special qualifications. The sphere for such service is very large; hardly any neighbourhood exists without its poor, or any church without its suffering ones.—*Rev. H. Chester, Cardiff.*

DOES THE WATER BOIL?

"We need men of hot hearts to tell of the love of Jesus," was the appeal sent home by some Chinese converts the other day. This is what the Church needs—what the world needs—"men of hot hearts." "I would ye were hot," is the Master's cry. If we are to succeed, we must be on fire about it. Dr. Arnott, of Edinburgh, tells of his being at a railway-station one day, and wearied of waiting for the train to move, he asked one of the men what the trouble was. "Is there a want of water?"

"Plenty of water, sir," was the prompt reply, "but it's no bilin'."

That's the trouble with the Church today. There's abundance of machinery, the engine is all in order, the train is made up, the men are at their posts—"there's plenty of water, but it's no bilin'." The great motive power is wanting. We need to heap on the fuel of sound doctrine; not shavings of sentiment which make a big blaze only to go out as quickly, but the solid logs of fundamental truth—chunks, if you will. But we need yet more the fire—to be baptized with the Holy Ghost as with fire.

COUNTING CONVERTS.

A Ragged Church pioneer thus writes: "I am often asked,—'But are there any spiritual results?' He thought that we are too fond of asking what are the fruits of preaching; for it seemed to be too much like dictating to the Holy Ghost what he ought to do. We should rather labour on in faith and prayer, whether fruits are known or otherwise." With this agrees the following remark of a most successful female evangelist: "I will not make any statement as to the number of believers, for when one goes to figures, Satan is at hand. The day will reveal it. It is better and happier to work on, leaving it all in the Lord's hand, than to sit down and count. When he gives the crown, there will be the right number of stars in it, and it will be time enough then to see what the Lord hath done by us."

It is enough for all true-hearted Christian workers to know that, in the day when the Lord "*counts* up his people," he will make no mistake in counting; but that the humblest member of the body of Christ will be present with him in glory. Till then, let us be content to labour on in faith, and not feed pride by counting our converts.

Facts and Scraps.

CHRISTMAS DINNERS.—We are glad again to have to report that many Ragged Schools gave dinners of old English fare, either on Christmas Day or during Christmas week. Among these were Lamb and Flag Court, Hartshorn Court, and New Tothill Street. In addition the Field Lane School dined 500 adult outcasts on Christmas morning, after a special service, conducted by Messrs. Hytche, Tawell, &c.; and Gray's Yard gave a Meat Breakfast to 500 casuals. The cost of these feasts was defrayed by special subscriptions.

PAWNBROKERS.—In the new Act to Consolidate and Amend the Law relating to Pawnbrokers there are some important alterations. It does not extend to Ireland. Under the new law pawnbrokers are liable in case of fire. This is a boon to the poor, and conferred by the 27th section. The pawnbroker is liable for loss or damage to articles by fire, and is entitled to ensure to the extent of the estimated value. There are various provisions as to penalties, and after the commencement of the Act a certificate from magistrates is to be obtained before a licence can be procured. To prevent an evasion of the Act, "leaving shops" have been brought within the enactments, and severe penalties are to be imposed for offences under the new law. This clause will, we trust, tend to suppress those "dolly shops" which are, in fact, so many thieves' pawnbrokers.

TEA.—A Custom-house return has been issued, which shows an enormous increase in the consumption of tea in the United Kingdom. In 1811 it averaged 1lb. 4oz. per head, and the average price was 6s. 8d. per pound; in 1821 the price was about 1s. less; and in 1831 there had been a further fall of 1s. 2d.; but the consumption per head was substantially the same as in 1811. In 1841 the price was 2d. lower than in 1831, and had fallen to 4s. 2¾d., and the consumption per head in the year had advanced to 1lb. 6oz. In 1851 the average price had fallen to 3s. 4¾d., and the consumption had increased to 1lb. 15oz. In 1861 the price had fallen to 2s. 10d., and the consumption had risen to 2lb. 11oz. per head. In 1871 the average price had fallen to 1s. 10½d., and the year's consumption had risen to 3lb. 15oz. per head, the total quantity entered for consumption exceeding 123,000,000lb.

LONDON PAUPERS.—We are glad to find that the number of London paupers, both indoor and outdoor, has much lessened of late, Thus it is stated in the weekly Poor Law returns relating to the metropolis that the total number of paupers in the second week of December last was 108,206, of whom 35,383 were in workhouses, and 72,283 received outdoor relief. Compared with the corresponding week in the years 1871, 1870, and 1869, these figures show a decrease of 13,668, 31,763, and 39,097 respectively.

Notices of Meetings.

DRURY LANE.

The Drury Lane Christian Mission recently held a meeting at 65, Drury Lane, to inaugurate a Workmen's Hall, which had been completed at that address, and which is henceforth to be devoted to the various useful purposes of the mission.

Mr. Butt opened the proceedings yesterday evening by stating that, two

years since, the members had to assemble in an old hall; but, thanks to the generous support of friends, they had now a new and commodious one, which would be devoted to religious services, moral instruction, and educational and scientific lectures.

Mr. Butt was followed by Mr. Hambleton, the secretary, who gave a long and interesting history of the rise and progress of the mission, and a detail of the difficulties and expenses which had to be met in raising the new hall. On the 2nd of December last year he paid 17s. 7d. for pulling down the old hall, and on the 2nd of December this year they were assembled in the new one. The cost had been £480, all of which, he was happy to say, had been paid off, and they were ready to start free of debt, but with an empty exchequer. Mr. Hambleton proceeded to explain the various objects to which the building would be devoted—religious services and prayer meetings on Sundays, Bible-classes, musical classes, and moral and educational lectures during the week. The Baroness Burdett-Coutts, besides sending them £100 and two pictures, had promised also to send them a lecturer.

GRAVESEND.

The annual meeting of the friends and supporters of the Gravesend Ragged School was held at the Assembly Rooms. There was a very good attendance. The Mayor (E. Wates, Esq.) presided. The report stated that at the Sunday School the following had been the attendance in winter:—Scholars, afternoon, 150; evening, 177. Teachers, afternoon, 17; evening, 18. The Day School was helpful to those poor children who, from inability or carelessness on the part of their parents to pay the necessary fees, are not able to obtain the instruction necessary to raise them from their ignorance. The attendance for the year ending September last had been—Highest, 176; lowest, 96. Fifteen scholars have left the town. The duty of parents to pay for the education of children when it lies in their power is constantly urged upon them, the result being that 17 have gone to other schools where a fee is required. The Night School for Boys is still carried on by ladies. Number on books, 28; average attendance, 18. The Night School for Girls is carried on two evenings a week during the winter; average attendance, 25. Girls' Sewing Class: Number on books, 87; average attendance, 49. Pence paid by the girls during the year amounted to £6 9s. 10d.; number of garments made, 273; 62 of which have been distributed gratuitously. There were 10 scholars entitled to prizes given by the Ragged School Union to those who retain their situations with good character for twelve months; three received the prize for the second time. The Band of Hope has 64 members. The Bible Mission has been successfully continued. Mothers' Meetings: The accounts of the one held on Monday evenings show £18 6s. 6d. paid by the mothers; total attendance during the year, 569; garments made, 169. There have also been 49 Mothers' Meetings on Tuesday evenings; articles of clothing made, 566; payments by members, £53 16s. 8d. The Penny Bank: Amount of deposits for the year, £352 15s. 4d.; new accounts opened, 346.

Papers, Original and Selected.

SOCIAL AND EVANGELISTIC WORK IN THE LONDON RAGGED SCHOOLS.

Those who have the slightest knowledge of the history of Ragged Schools—that "romance of the streets," as it has been aptly styled—need not to be reminded that the primary object of the pioneers in this great moral crusade was religious rather than secular. They found tens of thousands in London who were as much sunk in heathenism as the Fetish-worshippers of Central Africa. These were not only ignorant of the very elements of Christianity, but, heedless of the laws of man, they were as plague-spots in the midst of British civilisation. Thus neglected by society, they threatened to subject it to the penalty due to such indifference, and sooner or later to re-enact all the horrors of the French "reign of terror."

Hence it became the question to all Christians who were really in earnest, Can such moral ulcers be cured? or must they be permitted to ripen to the eventual destruction of society? Happily, this question was no sooner suggested than a solution was found to this social enigma. That Gospel of Christ, which has ever been found to be the "power of God unto salvation," was the panacea presented; and so, with the Bible for their sole weapon, earnest men and women stormed slum, and den, and hovel, and with signal success. For many a modern Micah (Judg. xvii. 2) and many a juvenile Mary Magdalene proved that the story of the Cross of Christ had not lost its ancient power of reaching the heart of the vilest.

It is true that Ragged School teachers did not rest in religious work. The spendthrift habits, the drunkenness or gluttony, of myriads, and the dire poverty of thousands, necessarily suggested many steps in advance; and thus attempts were made to reach the social needs of the destitute or outcast classes. Penny Banks and Clothing Clubs, Bands of Hope and Children's Dinners, were gradually added to our machinery; but, whatever the agency

employed, from the confidence felt by the poor in Ragged School teachers, their success was immediate and signal.

Secular instruction, too, was added to the bulk of Ragged Schools; since it was found that boys who could neither read nor write could not get or retain respectable situations. It is true that there were British or National Schools near most Ragged School districts, but then the fee was either too great for classes who ever bordered on poverty to pay, or their children were too dirty or ragged to be fit to mingle with the children of decent mechanics. But directly our Day and Night Schools were opened thousands flocked into them of the right class, namely, those whose parents were too poor to pay the ordinary school fees, or those whose parents preferred to spend their money in gin. The latter class was found to be the most difficult to manage, and from it sprang the mass of juvenile crime.

Nor were adults overlooked by the earnest workers in Ragged Schools. At first, of course, every effort was confined to juveniles; but when it was seen how the confidence of the mothers was secured, the propriety of gathering them into the semi-religious and semi-social Mothers' Meeting was suggested. Their marked success led to a further step to attract classes far beyond the reach of the ordinary means of grace; and, in 1852, the first "Ragged Church" was opened with signal success. They are now planted in every wretched district of this great city; and most include such examples of consistent piety as to constitute them preachers by *life*, if not by *lip*.

From this *résumé* of our operations it will be seen that the Committee of the Ragged School Union adopted no novel scheme when in their circular on the "future work" of the Union they stated (*ante* p. 3) that "they propose still further to extend and support the various operations with which the public have long been familiar, such as Ragged Sunday Schools, Penny Banks, Bands of Hope, Clothing Clubs, Mothers' Meetings, Evening Classes, &c., and to encourage and aid such other efforts as are likely to promote the social, moral, and spiritual well-being of the still neglected masses of the population—including Infant Nurseries, Labourers' Clubs, Ragged Churches and Children's Services, Medical and Gospel Missions, Parents' Lectures, &c., and to continue the Annual Prizes for Good Conduct so long given to boys and girls remaining in their situations for twelve months and upwards with

satisfaction to their employers." In fact, with the prospect of most of their work as secular educationists being ultimately undertaken by the School Board, they felt bound to revert to the original object of Ragged Schools; and thus, as respects the future, they hope to strengthen and extend those missionary and social plans which God has so richly blessed.

The extent of the evangelistic and social operations of the 168 affiliated Ragged Schools is marvellous; especially when the crippled financial state of so many institutions is considered. This will be seen by the following statistics, corrected up to 1st January last. As giving a clearer view of our social and missionary work, we shall divide these operations into two heads, namely:—

I. Religious Operations.

206	Sunday Schools. Morning and Evening.	Scholars	27,725
42	Children's Churches	„	3,050
54	Senior Bible Classes	„	1,360
73	Ragged Churches	Attendants	5,438
113	Prayer Meetings	„	3,219
76	Sunday School Libraries	Volumes	16,848

These schools and services are conducted by 2,784 voluntary teachers.

II. Social Operations.

89	Penny Banks	Depositors	28,906
54	Clothing Clubs	Members	1,374
3	Boot Clubs	„	92
2	Coal Clubs	„	90
11	Singing Classes	„	577
71	Mothers' Meetings	„	3,000
6	Men's Clubs or Meetings	„	600
42	Bands of Hope	„	4,569
3	Infant Nurseries	Weekly average	100
43	Children's Weekly Dinners		4,614

In addition to these 566 religious and 323 social operations, there are 112 Day Schools, with 11,877 scholars. 135 Night Schools have an average attendance of 6,089. In 97 Boys' and Girls' Industrial there are 3,229 little workers.

It thus appears that there are 1,232 distinct operations carried on in the 168 institutions under the inspection of the Ragged

School Union. Of these no less than 889 are strictly religious or social.

The population embraced by this machinery is also very large. By adding the Sunday Scholars to the regular attendants at our Ragged Churches, it appears that no less than 33,163 persons, old and young, are attracted into the London Ragged Schools every Lord's day. This is the population of "no mean city," and it shows what a responsible post we occupy.

We have referred to our social and missionary work in detail because it is these and kindred efforts which the Ragged School Union proposes to aid to a greater extent than heretofore. Hitherto the bulk of the money given to local schools has been contributed in aid of teachers' and monitors' salaries. During the past three years these annual grants amounted to £7,983, or an average yearly of £2,661. These grants to Day and Night Schools the Committee do not propose to withdraw, for rather they state that "it is *imperative* that they should still continue this necessary but at the same time difficult and expensive portion of their operations by giving increased aid to the managers of the various Day and Evening Schools with whom they are still likely to be identified. For it must not be forgotten that the *migratory* and generally *lawless* character of the very lowest of the population will for a time at least make the work of elementary education on their behalf by the School Board of London one of no small difficulty."

But in addition to such annual grants, the Committee of the Union have from the first given special grants towards the erection or improvement of buildings, and in aid of the liquidation of debt. In considering every such application regard was had to the *whole* work of the school—as well evangelistic and social as educational—and hence the amount granted was invariably based upon the general operations. These grants during the past ten years amounted to £4,037, or upwards of £400 per annum. Such special grants in some cases saved from extinction small but most valuable efforts.

This item, "Special Grants," will, it is expected, become in the future a large one in the expenditure of the Union; for as less will be required in aid of secular instruction, there will be the more to give in aid of missionary and social work. This, of course, is dependent upon the public still rendering that pecuniary help

which has never been withheld from any earnest effort to socialise and Christianise our poorer brethren.

Nor do we think that such pecuniary help will be withheld from Ragged Schools. Our work—wonderful as has been its success—is not yet done. A large field of usefulness still lies before us, and which is unoccupied by any other organisation. For example, the emigration from the provinces and Ireland—often of its very refuse—must task our energies to the utmost. But then, in addition to this, we have vices of home growth—the London-born wild tribes—to deal with, unless we are content to permit myriads to live without God, and to die without hope. Reeking slums—where fever and cholera are born and bred—abound everywhere; not only in the miles of sin and misery in the Far East, but in the very heart of the wealthy West. Thieves' public-houses, low music-halls, and still lower lodging-houses, are yet permitted to sow crime broadcast. Serials are published by the million in which sin is garbed as "an angel of light;" and, as if to teach youth how to carry out the narrative to the bitter end, theatres and gaffs portray crime in all its hideous details. These and similar agencies brood like a dark cloud over no small part of London, disseminating moral poison far and wide.

The only question which remains is this: Can any wiser plan, or any better agents, be devised to crush these crying social evils than Ragged Schools? If so, the promoters would readily yield up their task to the workers of the wiser system. But this we do not believe can be the case; or, if it is possible, such machinery has yet to be discovered. The fact that we *do* meet the moral and social claims of the destitute or outcast classes indeed is confirmed by the support so liberally given to the Union by the chairman of the London School Board, Lord Lawrence. The heads, too, of the law, the two last Lord Chancellors, Lords Cairns and Hatherley, are Vice-Presidents of the Ragged School Union; and the present one, Lord Selborne, has often earnestly pleaded the cause of Ragged Schools. Eight, too, out of eighteen of Her Majesty's judges actively support our plans. And why is this? Simply because they confirm the words of the Earl of Morley when he introduced the Bill for the Prevention of Crime to the House of Lords, "The returns of the Inspectors of Prisons showed that, in 1843, when the population was 16,300,000, the criminals sentenced to penal servitude or transportation amounted to 4,488,

and that, in 1869, when transportation was at an end, and when the population was 21,900,000, the criminals sentenced to penal servitude amounted to 2,006. That certainly must be reassuring to those who had an idea that crime was increasing in this country. He believed that the facilities for the detection of crime, increased education, and *the charitable institutions in which the noble earl* (Lord Shaftesbury) *opposite took so much interest, had, to an immense extent, repressed crime in this country.*"

These words so well state our case—figures which *are* potent facts—that any remarks of ours would be more than superfluous. For ourselves, with testimony like this to the value of Ragged Schools, we are not prepared to haul down our flag, but hope under that standard yet to fight many a battle with social vice and woe. For, should we quail in this crisis, we believe that the vision of Lord Macaulay would be literally realised, and a New Zealander would speedily sketch the ruins of St. Paul's on a broken arch of London Bridge.

THE "MIRROR" ON THE WORK OF THE RAGGED SCHOOL UNION.

THE following is a portion of a leading article in the *Mirror* of January 11, 1873. We do not reproduce the remaining part of the article, as it consists of quotations from our own report, &c.

"We have before us a most suggestive and important document signed by Lord Shaftesbury as Chairman on 'The Past and Present of the Ragged School Union: its Future Work.' Whether regarded as a review of what it has accomplished during upwards of a quarter of a century, or as a manifesto of its policy in times to come, it has not been published an hour too soon. For the great and glorious movement which has rescued so many thousands of the poor neglected children of our streets from misery, degradation, and sin—winning them from the paths of evil by a gentle teaching, based on a knowledge of the Living God—is in peril, and with it much of a religious teaching of the country, which renders these little ones missionaries to their own squalid homes, and instructors even of their own parents in the ways of truth. For a cry has gone forth—and it is a most ungrateful one—that because Parliament has, out of very shame, at length followed the example of other countries, and said that every child in the State shall be educated, there is no longer need for the religious, moral, and social work which has ever been the primary object of the Ragged School. But there was no such educational *furore* some thirty years ago, when the Society of which we write was established for the express purpose of bringing under useful and Christian teaching the Nobodies' children of

London and its suburbs—in those days when large masses of the juvenile population were in so deplorable a condition that thousands had never entered a school, and were growing up in every kind of ignorance and depravity. Yet scarce a word of thanks is vouchsafed to the gallant soldiers of the Cross who, under the leadership of Lord Shaftesbury, have so long fought the hard fight, and are only asked to lay down their arms now that a more disciplined army has flocked around the educational banner. Those who speak so slightingly of the Ragged School, and regard it as an institution which, having served a temporary purpose, has become *effete*, should remember the good it has done during a long course of years, and not grudge a well-deserved tribute to the 3,000 helpers, not drawn from the highest, but the middle and even the humblest classes of society, who, in long succession, have been found so faithful to the cause.

The Ragged School Union, admitting that the altered circumstances of the Primary Education question, brought about by the Education Act of 1870, renders it needful to remodel and extend its plans, makes an emphatic declaration of its future policy, so that it may adapt itself to the new exigencies of the times. But before doing so the Committee recall the times when it became necessary, in order to meet the case of neglected masses of children, to establish special Day and Night Schools, and which, in order to indicate the class to be reached and to keep to that class only, were designated 'Ragged Schools,' while they were at the same time made 'Free,' so that there should be no barrier to the admission of those most needing them. And why free? Because it was in those days a well-ascertained fact that there were thousands of children too low in the social scale to pay the smallest fee for education; in fact, it was found that, instead of their paying school fees, in was needful, in special cases, to feed and clothe many of them; and, for some, even to provide dormitories to enable them to attend school of any kind. Ah! those were, indeed, dark times, when such a thing as 'compulsory education' would have been regarded by statesmen and lawgivers as an Utopian dream, and there were no such institutions as School Boards armed with the power to levy rates for school purposes, and to acquire sites for schools, and build great edifices thereon for the instruction of street juveniles, and no School Board officers to hunt up those human waifs and strays on the great stream of London life, that they may be taught their A B C and something more—everything, in fact, *except the Bible!* Moreover, it was found, just thirty years ago, that there were large numbers of children belonging to parents—and unhappily the race is not extinct in 1873—who, although able to pay a small school fee, were so self-indulgent and degraded as not to have the least regard for their offspring, either for time or eternity. But there was no power 'to take the law' against ruch irresponsible people, and the only way to get at these hapless children was by a school, which was not only free to the ragged and the hungry, but which they were affectionately invited to enter. It cannot be charged against 'the Union' that it ever sought to raise Ragged Schools above the level for which they were intended, to divert them from their original purpose, or to place them in competition with other schools. On the contrary, they have ever been considered, so far as

the Day Schools were concerned, only as tentative, to be superseded in due time by some more effective and permanent arrangement. But it must never be forgotten that the primary object of these schools was to bring the gospel to bear on the neglected outcasts of society. The secondary object was, by means of secular education, in addition to all the social, moral, and religious efforts, to fit scholars of all ages for a life of usefulness and respectability either at home or abroad."

RAGGED SCHOOLS IN ROME.

In our volume for 1871 (p. 173) we intimated that an American lady, Mrs. Gould, had established a Ragged School in the very heart of Rome. This school has, we are glad to say, prospered beyond the expectations of the most sanguine. It has thus supplied another proof that there is nothing like the Ragged School, whether at home or abroad, for reaching the homes and the hearts of the destitute or outcast classes.

It is pleasing to learn that America—ever foremost in *real* missionary work—has hitherto supplied the funds. Mr. Cheyne Brady, in the *Christian*, gives the following sketch of this Ragged School:—

"Rome is very brilliant! Rome is the capital of Italy! Rome is free! Civil and religious liberty is proclaimed! The gospel may be, and is, preached to the Romans in their native tongue. Bibles, gospel portions, and tracts, are being freely distributed. How joyful and invigorating!

Passing through these gay scenes, we wended our way to a very narrow lane, called the Viccolo Soderini, in order to visit the Ragged Schools opened by Mrs. Gould, an American lady, in March, shortly after the disastrous inundations which took place in 1870-71, causing so much distress and destitution amongst the poor.

Having ascended five or six flights of marble steps, we were attracted by the sound of little voices, and on opening a door, we saw, in a small room, about a dozen little ones, three or four years old, sitting in a semi-circle before their teacher, who was teaching them the alphabet from a large box of letters. On entering the room, all the little ones rose and saluted us with '*Buon giorno, signore.*'

We passed on to another small room, where were rather older children, sitting round a table, and being instructed by means of a box of cubes.

In the third room, a large hall, used as a church on Lord's days, we found Mrs. Gould, with a number of children, averaging from six to twelve years of age. Some were being instructed in arithmetic. Our attention was particularly arrested by two little boys, who were sitting by themselves, deeply engaged in doing a sum; nor did our presence even cause them to raise their eyes from their slates. Some of the elder children are taught geometry, on the German Kinder Garten system, with much success. The children, numbering nearly one hundred, were then assembled to sing. Each class, forming a string, hand in hand, came forward, and when all were together, they were desired to put their first finger on their mouth in token of silence. Perfect order reigned amongst the little community, and a cleaner or more intelligent set of little faces we have rarely seen.

They sang three or four Italian hymns without book in good time and tune, and the translation of 'I have a Father in the Promised Land;' another, 'I want to be an angel.' Afterwards they sang an English hymn, pronouncing the words very correctly. And, lastly, they sang the English alphabet, which seemed greatly to amuse them. I asked Mrs. Gould if they understood the English hymn, and Mrs. Gould said that she does not allow them to sing anything they do not fully understand.

They have a Scripture lesson every morning. The priests gave great opposition at first, and several children were taken away for a time; but soon afterwards the parents of the children brought them back, and with tears entreated her to receive them again, which was done as a great favour.

Each child has a little chair, and aprons are provided to cover torn frocks and jackets. At the hour for opening, the directress is generally present, and the children repeat texts of Scripture, and receive a lesson on the life of the Saviour. Lessons are given in geography, arithmetic, grammar, and history, reading and writing. There is an intermission of an hour at noon, when the poorest are provided with a simple meal. They are taught to use Frobel's games, and others.

This is a very interesting work, and calculated to be of great use, as the children are instructed in the gospel, and taught English, thus laying the foundation for a more solid work when they are capable of understanding and receiving the message of eternal life. It was very encouraging to witness so many Roman children gathered under sound teaching in the heart of Rome, when a few months ago such a step would have been attended with banishment to the teachers and imprisonment to the taught."

The following case will indicate the bitter persecution to which some of the scholars have been exposed. Mrs. Gould writes:—

"Among the girls of our first class was one whose parents had been ruined by the late inundation of the Tiber. She was very wild when she first came to us, but had gradually yielded to the kind but firm discipline we try to exercise, and had become exceedingly attached to her school and teachers. During my absence, certain noble ladies presented themselves to the mother of this child, a woman naturally feeble, and who has suffered much both in body and mind since her troubles of last year. These ladies told her that she was being punished by God for her sin in placing her children at the Italo-American schools, which were represented as sinks of iniquity. But the new friends of the poor woman in question were ready to come to her relief. Her *padrone di casa*, who was about to raise her rent, should be induced to be lenient, and above all, her daughter should be well provided for, if she would but follow their counsel. They would place her in an excellent seminary, where she would be brought up with young ladies, receive a thorough education, and on leaving the institution be presented with a dowry. The mother persuaded the father to allow her to accept the fine offers of these ladies, and the child, by their recommendation, was told herself, and directed to say at school, that she was to be taken to Florence. All went on as well as the zealous members of *The Society for the promotion of Catholic Interests* could have desired.

The child, who could not otherwise have been persuaded to leave her school, was consoled with the idea of a change, and of visiting an aunt to whom she is attached. The teachers at the school were thoroughly deceived, and so also was the poor mother. For when the carriage, in which the noble ladies came for their prize, left the humble door of her parents, they neither directed its steps to the railway station as the child had expected, nor to an institution of learning as the mother had supposed, but to a house of correction under the charge of the nuns of St. Agatha. Here then, in company with far from repentant Magdalenes, this poor girl went through experiences, which, while they are quite too shocking to repeat, could never have been invented by a young girl not yet thirteen years of age. The poor child was of course very unhappy, but as she was never allowed to see her mother alone, there seemed no hope of escape. At last she was advised, by an inmate of the convent, to tell the story of her life there to her mother in the presence of the attending nun. She did so, and the poor distracted woman ran for her husband. It was in vain, however, that the parents insisted upon removing their child. To all their prayers and remonstrances, a cold refusal was the only reply. At last, the mother in her agony came for me. 'Help me, help me,' was her cry, 'they have stolen my child.' The Vaudois teacher, Mr. Garnier, who had charge of the school during Mrs. Gould's absence, was moved by the distress of the poor woman, and accompanied her to the convent. The nuns still persisted in their refusal, but as Mr. Garnier was peremptory in his determination not to leave the house without her, and to call in the aid of the police if necessary, the required permission was obtained, and she was restored to her parents. For some time the appearance of the girl was like that of some frightened animal, but she has now recovered her spirits, and we trust that ultimately her terrible experience under the protection of the nuns of St. Agatha will leave no trace behind it."

In addition to this effort to reach the wants of the poor children of Rome, another has been recently instituted akin to that of the English Refuge. Leaving his celebrated "Home for Little Wanderers" in New York in safe hands, Mr. Van Meter has transferred his work among poor juveniles to the capital of Italy. Being very successful—for from the outset candidates for the Home pressed in from all quarters—the hatred of the Ultramontanes, who regard "ignorance as the mother of devotion," was excited to a white heat. As, unhappily, some legal formality was unwittingly omitted, the priesthood availed themselves of this neglect to induce the municipal authorities to close the Home. But as the rules of the municipality are now being complied with, there is every reason to believe that the Home will soon be reopened. In the meantime, the Jesuits have as usual overshot the mark; for the publicity given to this attempt to socialise and evangelise the juvenile arabs of Rome, has not only aroused public interest, but has won many friends to the experiment. It is a pleasing feature in this movement to learn that the scholars of American Sunday Schools are the chief subscribers to the funds of Mr. Van Meter's institution.

As a result of this preaching and teaching the pure gospel, may it be soon recorded of Rome as in the first ages of the Church (Rom. i. 8), "Your faith is spoken of throughout the world"!

FLINT SOUP; OR, MARY SAFFELL'S RECIPE.

A READING FOR MOTHERS' MEETINGS.

ROBERT SAFFELL was a hard-working labourer, who thought if his master was bound to pay his weekly wages he was equally bound to work with all his might. Kind in his manner, he was very popular with his shop-mates; not the less so with the better conducted because he never indulged in loose or profane language. He was always ready, too, to help any mate when in trouble or in sickness.

Yet he had one "infirmity," as men call it, but which God knows by another name, viz., *sin*, for he could not, or, more properly speaking, *would* not, resist his fellow-labourers when they invited him into the parlour of the "Fox and Goose," especially on Saturday evening. There he sat imbibing drugged liquor and inhaling the vapour of rank, stale tobacco, till the two combined made him giddy and sick. At midnight he left, amid a hoarse chorus from his fellow-topers, "He's a jolly good fellow." The why or wherefore they could not have explained even in their sober moments.

Now Robert, who never lost his temper when sober, strange to say, never lost it when tipsy; so that to the mild, tearful remonstrances of a wife whom he loved, he only replied with a tipsy smile. Mary Saffell was a Christian woman, and hence while she grieved over the discomfort which was stealing into a once comfortable home, she still more mourned over the prospect of a drunkard's death and a drunkard's eternity. Oh, how earnestly she prayed against her husband's folly! But she did something more, for she thought out a remedy which she was not slow in putting into practice. Mary had well learnt that if Satan's favourite word is "to-morrow," that of God's is "to-day." So, like a wise woman, what she had to do she did *at once*.

One frosty Saturday morning she said to her husband as he was starting for work—

"Robert, if you will come home this evening direct from your workshop I will give you such a treat as you have never had in your life."

"What will it be, Mary?" said the half-ashamed man, for he well understood the quiet innuendo.

"Why, a nice supper of FLINT SOUP," replied his wife.

"Well," said Robert, "I have heard that a joke *is* a joke; but this is anything but a joke, for whoever heard of flint soup?"

"Well, give me your promise, and you shall see which is best—flint soup or gin."

Robert laughingly gave his promise, and, what is still better, meant to keep it.

Now what did Mary do to compound her novel dish? We shall see. She was a very poor woman,—for whoever knew a tippler's wife to be rich?—yet she contrived to supply the promised treat. She first chose a large flint stone, which she carefully cleaned, and so polished that it looked quite handsome. She then bought a half-pennyworth of herbs and onions, and

a pennyworth of bones, which she so broke and bruised that every particle of nutriment was found in the pottage. To a quart of water she added a slice of bread, so well browned that the soup was most captivating both to eye and smell. For Mary well knew that the eyes and nostrils judge food as unerringly as does the palate.

"Won't you come in for an hour?" said his shopmates, as Robert was darting by the "Fox and Goose," half-distrusting himself.

"Not to-night," said Robert, not daring to look at the flaring gas-lights of the public-house, "I'm wanted at home."

"Well, Mary, here I am," said Robert, as he entered his cottage; "and now for the flint soup." This was poured out, steaming hot, into a basin whiter than milk; the table-cloth doing equal credit to her skill as a washerwoman. The loaf on the table was brown and crisp, for though not "a man given to appetite," one of Robert's weaknesses, as he confessed, was a crisp, crusty loaf.

"Well," said Robert, after he had inhaled the appetising smell, and tasted the novel but savoury compound, "but you don't mean to tell me that this soup was made of flint."

Mary took the flint out of the saucepan, and held it before his wondering eyes. "'Seeing is believing,' they say," said Robert; "but surely you must have put something into the water besides flint, for it beats Soyer."

"I shan't tell you my secret yet," said Mary, laughingly; "but if you will promise to come home every Saturday night you shall always have a basin of flint-soup for supper as nice as this."

Robert made the bargain with his wife, and soon passed the "Fox and Goose" at a walking-pace, like a man who knows what is right, and, with God's help, means to do it. To one jeering shopmate he said—

"I cannot see the sense of making ourselves paupers in order that a fat publican may find money to keep a barouche."

To another, whom he at length brought over to his way of thinking, he said—

"Bless God, I have learned that the *best* side of a public-house is the—*out*-side."

In this way did a basin of flint soup become a turning-point in Robert Saffell's life. No Saturday night now passes in which he does not invite a fellow-labourer to partake of this true "festive bowl." After some time Mary was coaxed into telling her secret; but Robert declares that he never would have been owner of the neat cottage where he lives—and which is known as Flint Cottage—had it not been for her flint soup.

Would it not be well if other labourers' wives would try the same experiment to wean their husbands from the "Fox and Goose," or those "Goose Clubs," the members of which the wily chuckling landlord knows to be the real geese?—E. J. H., *British Workman*.

LEEDS INDUSTRIAL DWELLINGS.

THE difficulty poor men find in getting healthy house-room in London is patent to every observer. But it may be thought that such measures as those carried out by the Peabody trustees represent just such an effort as is needed. This is the impression current among many philanthropists, but it is, we regret to say, erroneous. However admirable the gift of that benefactor to the working classes may be, it is in no way associated with the reform for which we seek. Doubtless they provide comfortable and healthy dwellings for artisans, and this, too, at fair rents, considering the nature of the accommodation; but it is for a class below that of the well-paid artisans that we must provide. For it is not in the houses of the better class of artisans that typhus and cholera are born and bred. If then we would banish infectious epidemics from our towns, we must provide for a class far below that which rents the tenements in the Peabody buildings.

This point Dr. Clifford Allbutt brought forcibly before a meeting of the Epidemiological Society. In an able paper on "The prevention of typhus by improvement of the dwellings of the poor," he showed by fact and argument that by remedying the existing evil we may, if not prevent, at least considerably diminish the extension of infectious diseases. Dr. Allbutt described an experiment which has been carried out at Leeds by a body calling itself the "Leeds Industrial Dwellings Company (Limited)," and which we hope to see repeated in London and other populous cities. Pure philanthropy, however much it may achieve within certain limits, can never bring about such a reform as that which is imperatively demanded in London. Nor can it be supposed that the proprietors of small house property will be tempted by such rents as the poor can offer. Nothing remains, therefore, to hope from any scheme which has no commercial basis for its recommendation.

Let us see, then, what can be done to improve the state of the poor at a fair profit to the speculators. A number of gentlemen in Leeds formed a company, with a capital of £50,000 in shares of £5 each. They expended about £1,615 in purchasing ground and erecting a building which contains twenty-five dwellings. It contains four stories, there being *no cellars*, and it is divided into tenements of various sizes, generally of two or three rooms. Galleries lead to the several tenements, and these latter are arranged with due regard to the common laws of health. Cubic space is fairly provided; the method of ventilation is good; the closet arrangements are of the simplest, most effective, and least destructible character; and the provisions for the removal of dust and refuse are very good. There are no fireplaces in the bedrooms, but ventilation is provided for by air-bricks; it being the experience of those who visit the poor that the *flues of their bedroom fireplaces are too commonly stuffed with bags of straw*. Boilers and wash-houses are also supplied. Altogether the block of buildings, whilst of the plainest and simplest character, is constructed upon sound sanitary principles, and in accordance with the wants of the people.

What has been the result? The rooms have been all "let" at moderate rents (seldom, we believe, exceeding two or three shillings per week), and as rapidly as they become unoccupied they are retaken. The tenants conform rigidly and agreeably to all the regulations of cleanliness, &c., imposed on them by the Company, and appear to be well pleased with their position. So far as can be seen, health and comfort prevail, where formerly were misery and disease; and this attempt towards ameliorating the condition of the poor has so far been eminently successful.

But has it paid? asks the capitalist. To this Dr. Allbutt replies in the affirmative. The rents for the whole amount per annum to £150 0s. 4d.; the expenses of management, repairs, &c., are set down at £46, thus leaving a net return in favour of the Company of £104 odd. Thus this experiment in commercial philanthropy has yielded a return of about 6½ per cent. to the capitalists engaged in it. Here is a fact for London speculators. Even if we admit as not improbable that the Company has exaggerated its profits, even if we put the returns down at 3 or 4 per cent., and allow the shares to fluctuate with consols, is not the scheme worthy of the consideration of the wealthy? To be at one and the same time public benefactors and private speculators is surely sufficient temptation to investment.

Why then should not some enterprising philanthropist try the Leeds plan in London? It seems full of practical promise, and must needs, if successful, be productive of incalculable and permanent benefit to a class who, even if they had the will, have not the means of paying for healthy homes.

LOST BUT FOUND.

In a cold, comfortless dwelling, belonging to one of the dark closes in Edinburgh, Janet M—— was born. From the first she had a miserable uncared-for life. Her father was a worthless man; he had no religion, and he professed none. His children received no kind of education; and when they grew up they could neither read nor write. When Janet was asked in after years if she had not attended church as a girl, she thought for a moment, and then replied that she had only been four times in church up to the age of eighteen, or thereabouts. The cruelty of a bad stepmother, added to the careless indifference of her father, at last drove her from her wretched home. The poor girl tried to gain an honest livelihood at first, and, accompanied by a companion, made a little money by playing a hand-organ in the streets. It was not long before she yielded to temptation, and strayed into the paths of open sin.

We need not trace the sad downward steps by which the pretty, simple girl became an adept in vice. All the time she was miserable; and when disease sent her to an infirmary, Janet almost longed, in her ignorance, for death. But what dense, dark ignorance it was! Telling a Christian lady in after years that she had felt quite pleased when the doctors called her

case almost hopeless, the question came naturally, "But had you no fear of death—no thought of what would become of the soul?"

"I never thought about my soul at all," she said; "but when the snow was falling, or the wind very chill, I did think that my body would be cold lying in the damp churchyard; and I felt a shrinking from that."

One day, when her sufferings were more than usually acute, a kind visitor stood by her bedside, and dropped a few words of tender sympathy. "You need not pity the like of her," said a patient in the next bed; "whenever she's better she will just go back to her old ways again;" and added some expressions of bitter scorn. Janet heard all, and amid her dreadful bodily sufferings the thought forced itself on her mind, "If my fellow-creatures despise me like this, oh, what must God think of me!"

Dismissed from the infirmary in this state of mind, and loathing from the heart her former mode of life, she crawled down one of the gloomy "closes" near the hospital to the house of a near relative, who kindly received the poor girl in her extremity. Her deep agony of mind and intolerable sense of sin increased. "We almost starved," she said one day long afterwards; "but poor as we were, I used to scrape every farthing together that I might buy a bit of candle to burn through the night. For oh, I could not bear the dark with that terror of a present, angry God upon me!"

One day a neighbour looked in. She could not teach Janet what she did not know herself; but she said, "I'll ask the city missionary to come and talk to you." Very soon he was seated by the girl's bed, telling the "old, old story" of Jesus' dying love. Afterwards he remarked to a friend, "If I had penetrated to the heart of Africa, and spoken of the gospel to the heathen there, I *could* not have found one more utterly ignorant than this Scotch girl in Edinburgh." The missionary did not seek to comfort her by making her sin appear less; he did not speak peace where there was no peace. "True, you *are* a great sinner,—ay, greater than you think yourself; but Jesus is a great Saviour; 'He receiveth sinners; his blood cleanseth from all sin.'" And then he took that text, "Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely," and preached Christ in his fulness. Oh! how eagerly the poor thirsting spirit drank of the life-giving stream. And when the man of God had bidden her farewell, and left her alone with her friend, she raised herself in the bed, and said, "Is that *true?* Are these words really in the Bible? 'WHOSOEVER'—'FREELY!'" Assured of that—satisfied that God *had* spoken this invitation—Janet never for a moment doubted his willingness to save *her*. She took him at his word, and sank back on her pillow in perfect peace—the burden of sin for ever rolled away at the foot of the cross.

Janet recovered in great measure her bodily health, although her constitution was sorely shattered. Kind friends were raised up who ministered to her temporal and spiritual wants. A Christian lady heard of her case from the city missionary, visited her regularly, and read the Bible to her.

We could tell of many a happy visit paid to her little room. Only once I heard her allude to the sinful past. It was just after a communion Sabbath, and with the great tears rolling down her cheeks, she said, "The

minister spoke about the woman who had been a sinner, and who in her love and sorrow washed *His* feet. Oh! how could I help feeling just like her?" The "peace that passeth understanding," the "joy unspeakable" that beamed in her very look, never interfered with her deep humility, her intense self-abhorrence. She had heard the heavenly voice, "Thy sins are forgiven thee;" she knew that all was forgotten as if it had never been. But *she* could not forget, she could not forgive herself; and just because she realised in some degree how much had been forgiven her, so it came to pass that she "loved much."

"Surely no one can hear this without crying," she remarked, weeping, while Matt. xxvii. was read to her one day. "I never can keep back my tears when I think of my Saviour's love, and all it cost him." And the thought of his sufferings enabled her to bear her own. Before, her cries and groans had at times been heart-rending to listen to. *Now*, one quiet whisper about the love of Jesus, one gentle reminder of his untold agony, and instantly she suppressed all outward indication of pain.

Janet has now reached the heavenly home, and sees Him face to face, "whom having not seen, she loved." The memory of her latter years is fragrant in the hearts of her friends; who saw in her not only a remarkable monument of God's free, saving grace, but one of the loveliest Christian characters they ever met.

FRUIT-BEARERS.

One reason why the fig-tree is so apt an emblem of Christian life and character may be that, in the regular order of development, fruit is understood to precede the appearance of leaves. In the healthy tree, therefore, foliage warrants the presumption of at least incipient fruit. So a religious profession, that is at all credible, presupposes, and is generally accepted as evidencing, a previous change of heart, and the existence of the fruits of the Holy Spirit.

The reasonable expectation thus raised is not, however, in every case realised. The leaves may be unnatural, and out of season, giving promise of good that upon close examination does not appear.

When, during his morning walk from Bethany to Jerusalem, in company with his disciples, Jesus being hungry, approached a fig-tree; seeing leaves thereon, he was justified in expecting fruit. A presumption so natural was disappointed. The tree was unfruitful—it bore nothing but leaves. Can we wonder at the sequel, or fail to understand why presently the fig-tree withered away? Apart from the special curse that lighted on it, how could such a tree, presenting an irregular growth of leaves, be in health? And does not the Master's curse, resulting in perpetual barrenness, incurable blight and inevitable decay, rest on those in his vineyard who resemble barren fig-trees. Must there not be radical unsoundness, something seriously defective, in a nominal fruit-bearer that displays only leaves, disappointing the hopes its fair appearance has raised? Now can any one tell how long the leaves themselves may retain the appearance of

thrift on a hollow-breasted, unproductive tree? Certainly: their freshness is superficial.

Leaves are a beautiful adorning, and in various ways really serviceable, but never can they be a substitute for fruit. They are the appropriate result and evidence of vegetable life and growth. They betoken vitality, and give promise of fruit, and promote in their measure the health of the tree. They are a pleasing indication of its vigour, and are indispensable to its symmetry and completeness. So in reference to all that of which they are the scriptural emblem. Outward profession, and consistent example, are a becoming manifestation of Christian character. And where the principle of grace reigns in the heart, we confidently expect its appearance in a good confession before men. It will affect speech and behaviour. A good tree *must* bear good fruit.

Vital godliness does not consist in external pretensions, mere professions, or outward forms. The true Christian is a fruit-bearer—something more valuable than showy evergreen, or an ornamental occupant of the garden of the Lord. His high vocation will not permit him to be a cumberer of the ground. He is to be known, not merely by promises, privileges, and professions, not by leaves and barrenness, but by his fruits. Otherwise his very professions, being dishonoured, go for nothing, and his character takes on the guise of hypocrisy.

Leaves he will indeed put forth, fair, unfading, and perennial. He will consistently manifest the life that is in him. He will not feel like recalling, suspending, dishonouring, or dropping his Christian profession.

> "Green as a leaf, and ever fair,
> Will his professions shine."

But what are leaves without fruit? And so in his life fruits of holiness must appear,

> "Like clusters in the vine."

He appears fresh and fair not only, but being truly alive in Christ Jesus, he brings forth fruit in its season. Observers are not disappointed or repelled, nor the symmetry of his Christian character marred by deplorable blemishes and inconsistencies, covering a fitful, inconstant, withered life.

How favourably situated for fruitfulness are the trees of righteousness! They are the planting of the Lord, blessed with his infallible culture, and the plentiful supplies of his grace. The Lord of the vineyard has assigned them their place amidst select advantages. They have access to the sources of spiritual prosperity, and are nourished by the springs of the heavenly life. The church, even in the wilderness, is well provisioned, and is happily placed for life and fruitfulness. There by the rivers of water, the trees of the Lord are not only full of sap, leafy, and fair, but yield the acceptable fruits of the Spirit. There fruit in its season should be unfailing, and the husbandman, at his coming, may justly presume on something better than leaves.

Poet's Corner.

WORK AND WAIT.

WAIT, Christian, wait:
That crown which hath no fading
Is thine when only all thy work is done;
Rest thou in Him who giveth, not upbraiding,
And go thou bravely, till thy race is run.
Not smooth the way, perchance, thy feet are taking,
Haply few sunbeams glint athwart thy sky;
Look upward, Christian! for the morn is breaking,
The shadows flee apace, thy rest is nigh:
Wait, Christian, wait.

Wait, Christian, wait;
Live only for thy Master;
Let the world gauge thee blindly as it please;
Misjudge thy hidden work, count gain disaster,
A greater than the world shall reckon these;
Hidden in Christ, thy simple daily doing
Hath glory far exceeding earthly store;
Humble and mean and poor to worldly viewing,
But for this work God setteth wide the door:
Wait, Christian, wait.

Wait, Christian, wait:
Thy Life is one of giving;
Not here the crown, not here the victor's palm.
Christ lives for thee, be thou for others living,
Rest followeth labour; after conflict, calm.
Give unto others with no after thinking
From others still some good desired to gain;
Give thou, for Christ's sake, all thy self-hood sinking,—
For Him and *to* Him through thy joy or pain,
Wait, Christian, wait.

Wait, Christian, wait:
For *whom He loves* He chastens;
Purest the gold which passeth fiercest test;
The will that works by love tires not nor hastens,—
God leads and *holds* thee—His own time is best.
The eternal years are guarding all thy treasure,
The cords which bind thee lessen one by one;
That life of love which hath nor bound nor measure,
Lies just beyond where now thy way doth run:
Wait, Christian, wait.

A. L. BEAN.

Teachers' Column.

ROUNDABOUT LESSONS.

PHILIP, our landlord, came into the room. "Kelmann's wife," said he, "has just brought her child to the school; she seems to be a well-disposed person. She said that yesterday's discourse had deeply affected her, and that she regretted that her husband had not heard it also. She asked me whether I thought the minister would be so kind as to visit him, and take the opportunity of saying a good word to him."

"Is not that the woman who walks with a crutch?" inquired my uncle.

"The same."

"I remarked her yesterday in church, listening as intently as if the preacher had been almost out of hearing."

"Very likely," said the schoolmaster; "and I do not think a single word of the discourse had escaped her, for she repeated to me, almost word for word, those portions of it which had particularly struck her."

My uncle took a sidelong glance at me, and I cast my eyes to the ground. "There, now," said he at length, "you have got work already; you must go immediately and visit Kelmann."

In the afternoon I went to the home of the weaver, and found him busy at his work. His wife was not in the house, which was very poorly furnished, but clean and neat. I thought it as well not to tell him that it was by her desire that I had come. In himself I could discern no longing or inclination towards spiritual things. So soon as he had returned my salutation, he proceeded with his work, and allowed me to look on in silence. I stood for about ten minutes listening to the monotonous clank of the shuttle, with my eyes fixed upon the web. The weaver, meanwhile, maintained unbroken silence, apparently unconscious of my presence. I felt at length that I must speak, as that was the purpose for which I had come, and asked him various questions relating to his work, to which he gave the most laconic answers. He stopped while he was speaking, but so soon as he uttered his few words, the tiresome clank once more commenced. "Help, Heaven!" sighed I, "how shall I ever be able to begin a serious conversation with such a man as this?" At length I said, "In the Bible there are very early notices of spinning and weaving!"

"Ah, indeed, sir!" Click clack, click clack, went the shuttle. "Yes," continued I, biting my lips, "in Damascus it was even brought to great perfection."

"Indeed, sir! we are but simple people here, and do only very ordinary work."

The weaver was evidently a hopeless subject. I inquired for his wife. He told me she was in the stable with the cows; on which I took occasion to introduce the cows of Abraham and Pharaoh, hoping thereby to gain a footing with him upon Scripture ground. But in vain; he knew as little of Abraham as he had done of Damascus, and seemed to take about as much interest in either as he did in the dust which from time to time he blew from the linen he was weaving. I came home out of humour. My uncle, on returning from his walk, found me moodily resting my head upon my hands. I gave him a faithful and detailed account of my conversation with the weaver; and told him how I had even introduced the cows of Pharaoh and the linen of Damascus, in order to bring him, in spite of himself, to speak on scriptural subjects.

My uncle listened patiently to my narrative, then passed his hand over his face and smiled. "You spared yourself no trouble, then, to show this man the way to heaven?"

"Such at least was my aim throughout our interview."

"You could not have proposed to yourself a better one, but I cannot refrain from offering one observation."

"And that is—"

"That, according to my thinking, you took a very *roundabout way* to reach the point you aimed at."

"How so?" asked I, astonished.

"Why, there is surely a nearer road to heaven than by Egypt or Damascus. The Lord Jesus says—'*I am the Way.*' I believe you would have been more likely to attain your object, had you pointed our friend to him."—*The Signet Ring.*

SOME MISQUOTED TEXTS.

WE are often startled by hearing teachers quote as texts passages which, with the aid of our "Cruden," we cannot discover in Holy Writ. Sometimes, indeed, a portion is there, but the words are either so detached from the context, or the meaning is so distorted, that they are made to teach the very reverse of what they really teach.

The following are some of the misquotations which are most current, namely—1. "The merciful man is merciful to his beast." The Bible phrase is (Prov. xii. 10) "A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast."

2. "A nation shall be born in a day." But in Isaiah the verse is as follows (Is. lxvi. 8): "Shall a nation be born at once?"

3. "That he who runs may read." But the prophet says (Hab. ii. 2), that "he may run who readeth it."

4. To the precious promises uttered by our Master (Matt. xviii. 20) "where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them," the superfluous words are too often added, "and that to bless them."

In the same way wrong meanings are assigned to texts. Take two illustrations:—

1. The passage "Masters of Assemblies" (Eccles. xii. 11) is cited in the singular person, and so made to refer to Christ. Whereas the Masters of Assemblies are instructors—the "One Shepherd" in the text being Jesus, who gives them the "nails"—that is, doctrines to fasten on the heart.

2. The words (1 Thess. v. 22) "abstain from all *appearance* of evil," are construed to mean, refrain from all that may *seem* to others to be evil: whereas the words teach us to fear the very *beginning* of evil.

Now need we say that teachers cannot be too particular in quoting Scripture verbally? If for no other reason, then for this; the Holy Spirit who dictated the sentence also supplied the very *words* (1 Cor. ii. 13). If, then, we make any alteration, it practically indicates that we know more fitting words in which to present his meaning.

Again: children are ever great copyists. If we allow ourselves liberty to tamper either with the words or the meanings of Holy Writ, we may be sure that they will speedily imitate the evil practice thus set. QUARTUS.

Children's Gallery.

MABEL'S BIBLE LESSON.

"MOTHER, does the Bible teach wastefulness?" asked Mabel, looking up from her book.

"No, my dear," answered her mother.

"Then what does this mean?" asked Mabel, again: "Cast thy bread upon the waters, and thou shalt find it after many days."

Her mother then told her that in the country where the Bible was written, there were only two seasons, the dry and

the rainy; and that it was in the latter part of the wet season, while the rivers yet overflowed their banks, that the farmers planted their wheat—that is, cast it on the subsiding waters, which, in their turn, deposited it in the moist earth; and as soon as the sunshiny days came, it sprang up, covered the fields with a beautiful green, and brought a plentiful harvest in autumn.

"Then," said Mabel, "it might read, 'Cast thy wheat upon the waters, and thou shalt find bread after many days.' Yes, I think I understand it; but—" and Mabel stopped.

"But what?" asked her mother.

"Why, I suppose it has *another* meaning," said Mabel, "just as the Proverbs have."

"Yes," answered her mother, "there is a general truth wrapped up in this particular saying."

"What is it?" asked Mabel.

"Let *me* tell Mabel," said Uncle George, who had put down his book and listened to the conversation.

"Mabel," he said, "fifteen years ago, when I was at the academy at A——, two or three of the students took the stage-coach one vacation to visit the Welsh hills, and I am afraid we were rather a wild set. In the coach we found a gentleman, who soon fell into conversation with us, and we continued fellow-passengers for nearly two days. He pleasantly entered into our school-boy plans and pleasures, but he was a good man, and in his company we felt conscious of being in the presence of a superior, and his last words we never forgot. Well, Mabel, before the year was out we all joined the church of Christ, and we all dated our serious impressions to the conversation of that stranger in the stage-coach. I accidentally met him again about three years ago, made his acquaintance, recalled the circumstance to his mind, and told him what an influence he left upon his fellow-travellers many years before."

"And did the others become ministers like you, Uncle George?" asked Mabel.

"Not preachers," answered Uncle George, "but ministers of good in their different spheres. And now, Mabel, do you see how that stranger 'cast his bread upon the waters, and found it after many days'?"

"I think I do," said Mabel, her face brightening, "I think I do. We must do our part, and trust God for the fruit."

"Precisely so," said Uncle George, "precisely so; if you, Mabel, and I do *our* duty, good *will* spring out of it."

Precisely so do the editors and writers of religious periodicals fling broadcast over the land the little seeds of truth; and if, by God's blessing on their labours, there should be children here and there striving to improve themselves, becoming more useful in the stations where God has put them, and numbering themselves on the side of God and truth, their joy would indeed be "according to the joy of harvest." With renewed encouragement, then, would they begin the new year, "casting their bread upon the waters," and taking hold of that exceeding great and precious promise that "it *shall* be found after many days."

ELLA.

SNOWBALLS.

THE snow was falling thick and fast on the frosty ground, and a party of boys were busy with their snowballs. Many a good blow did they give to the passers by, and for awhile it was all fun, and none minded. But at length a missionary returning home from his daily rounds was seen to approach. The boys looked at each other, and in a moment stones were concealed in the snowballs, and with these he was assailed.

In order to escape quietly, he turned into a court, where he saw two dear little children standing out on a doorstep.

The missionary was a man who loved children, and was in the habit of speak-

ing kindly to all whom he met. He went up to these little children and spoke to them. They seemed very much pleased, and asked him to come in. He went in, and finding that father, mother, and children were all Roman Catholics, he spoke to them of Jesus, and invited the children to come to the Coombe Ragged School.

The following week the children appeared at school. They had never even heard of a Bible, and great was their delight when the story of Joseph was read to them.

When they went home they told the story to their father, and he promised the children he would get a Bible to read at home. Little Jenny was the reader, and evening after evening she read to her parents out of the Holy Book, calling their attention to passages about the love of Jesus and his willingness to save those who come to him.

Quite a little missionary was Jenny, but her work-day was short. Not many months passed away ere she was lying on her dying bed. One day her father said to her, "Jenny, when you go to heaven you'll pray for me?" "No, father," said she; "read the Bible, and you will see that there is no intercessor but the Lord Jesus, and that he is able to save you 'to the uttermost.'"

For two months Jenny lay suffering, but she was quite peaceful. She said Jesus was "taking her to himself," and she "begged of all her friends to come to Jesus as she had done, and trust entirely on him." And then the angels came and carried Jenny to heaven; and all through eternity she will thank her Heavenly Father that she ever entered the Coombe Ragged School, Dublin.

Facts and Scraps.

THE QUEEN'S JUDGES AND RAGGED SCHOOLS.—It is satisfactory to learn that at a time when some are doubting the utility of Ragged Schools, Her Majesty's Judges do not. For they know how much they have done to check the growth of juvenile crime. Hence the two late Lord Chancellors, Lords Cairns and Hatherley, are Vice-Presidents of the Ragged School Union; and the new one, Lord Selborne, has often warmly advocated them on public platforms. In addition to this, Justices Archibald, Byles, Denman, Keating, and Lush, and Barons Pigott and Pollock, have zealously supported them—the first and last as voluntary teachers. The wife of another, Lady Martin, taught a Ragged School Bible Class many years.

SUNDAY BREAKFASTS.—On the first Sunday morning of the New Year special services were held in Sermon Lane and Gray's Yard Ragged Schools, after which breakfasts were given to the needy attendants. In Gray's Yard 814 were present, mostly from casual wards.

BUILDING SOCIETIES.—It is estimated by the highest authorities on these matters that the total number of Building Societies in the United Kingdom amounts to not less than two thousand, with fully one million of members. The capital invested in London alone considerably exceeds three millions. These associations were originally started with the intention to terminate them after a certain time. The members consisted of two classes—investors and borrowers, the right to borrow being obtained by bidding at monthly sales. As soon as each investor received £120 per share the concern was closed. It was found, however, that this system of sales was unfair, as some borrowers had to pay a much higher

premium for their advances than others, according as there was competition. New societies were, therefore, established on a modified plan, the premium and the time of terminating being fixed. These, again, were succeeded by permanent societies. In these the investor either pays for his share by monthly instalments, receiving no interest until the whole amount is paid up, or he pays his share in one sum, at his discretion, and the borrower also is allowed a discretion as to the length of the term within which the advance must be repaid. These permanent societies have the further advantage over terminating ones, that they admit of new members constantly joining without being obliged to pay up back subscriptions.

COAL FOR DOMESTIC PURPOSES.—The *Journal of the Society of Arts* states that with reference to the sum of £500, placed at the disposal of the council of the society through Sir William Bodkin, by a gentleman who does not wish his name to appear, for promoting, by means of prizes or otherwise, economy in the use of coal for domestic purposes, the council have decided to offer the following prizes:—1. For a new and improved system of grate, suitable to existing chimneys, as generally constructed, which shall, with the least amount of coal, answer best for warming and ventilating a room, the society's gold medal and £10.—2. For a new and improved system of grate, suitable to existing chimneys as generally constructed, which shall with the least amount of coal best answer for cooking food, combined with warming and ventilating the room, the society's gold medal and £50.—3. For the best new and improved system of apparatus which shall, by means of gas, most efficiently and economically warm and ventilate a room, the society's gold medal and £50.—4. For the best new and improved system of apparatus which shall, by means of gas, be best adapted for cooking, combined with warming and ventilating the room, the society's gold medal and £50.—5. For any new and improved system or arrangement not included in the foregoing, which shall efficiently and economically meet domestic requirements, the society's gold medal and £50. The council reserve to themselves the right of withholding all or any of the above prizes, as the judges appointed by them may determine. The competing articles must be delivered not later than the 1st December, 1873, with a view to their being tested, and subsequently shown in the London International Exhibition of 1874.

HEALTHY DRINKS may be made by about two teaspoonfuls of oatmeal and a tumbler of water. It is said to be the best drink labourers can use, at once nourishing, unstimulating, and satisfying. And it is coming into use in establishments where men work much in the heat. It has long been used in glass factories and iron foundries of Europe. In the Brooklyn Navy Yard, says a paper called the *Science of Health*, it is a great favourite, two and a half pounds of oatmeal being put into a pail of moderately cool water. It is said to be better than any of the drinks made up with vinegar, molasses, &c., which American farmers use in the harvest field. A well-known medical writer says that "from it is obtained power to sustain the exhausting influence of perspiration."

Notice of Meeting.

MANCHESTER.

The annual meeting of the Manchester Royal Home and Industrial School was held at the Town-hall on January 6. W. Booth, Esq., the mayor, presided.

The Earl of Derby, in moving the

report, stated that this "home" had been founded about three years ago. It was rmed of four dwelling-houses which had been permanently secured for the use of the charity, and thrown together. Between 130 and 140 lads had been inmates of the institution, 75 being there at present, and the number might be considerably increased if the accommodation permitted. He could state with confidence that there was no other agency already existing which dealt with similar cases. Reformatory schools were only for those who had brought themselves under the law. Industrial schools, again, were doing a useful work, providing for above 9,000 children in England and Scotland, but these were limited by law as regards the ages of the inmates received. For the class dealt with in this institution—boys from thirteen to sixteen years of age, not convicted of any offence, too old to enter a certified industrial school, and having no home except the streets, or possibly such a home aa is worse than none, there had been really no place of refuge in Manchester except the workhouse. This new "industrial home" was the only place where they could get a good plain industrial teaching, such as would qualify them to make their way in life. An obvious question was, "Where are the parents?" In the great majority of the cases (last year's report said seven out of eight) there were no parents at all. It was only under very special circumstances that boys who had fathers within the district were admitted. The founders of the Home knew well, and perhaps, in their caution, even overrated, the risk of holding out to disreputable parents an inducement to neglect their children, and throw the care of them on strangers. This institution existed for the benefit of orphans and destitute lads mainly, with some admixture of others who, being separated from their families, and having come to Manchester to look for work, and not succeeding in finding it, are in a position of isolation, which is almost equivalent to orphanage. They only took lads at an age when they are able to make themselves useful at home and pay for a very large portion of their keep. He need not stop to discuss the question whether lads such as were qualified to be admitted into that Industrial Home ought to be helped or not. They were entitled to help as a matter of humanity, for they had done no wrong, and left to themselves, they had not a chance. To look at the matter selfishly, it was very much their interest to give them a lift, because the temporary assistance given these boys, extending at the most over a period of two or three years, might probably decide whether they are as workers to increase the public wealth, or whether they are to lessen it by living upon it for the rest of their days as paupers, vagrants, beggars, or possibly worse. Roughs are idle in the midst of industry, they are without a penny in the very centres of wealth, and absolutely, so far as we can see, they are in no respect the better for all that 3,000 or 4,000 years of human exertion have done to improve the condition of mankind. The "rough," or the "street arab," of our great towns is a much more disagreeable and humiliating object to contemplate than any mere savage would be; and he could not resist the conclusion that we have in England, relatively to our population, more than are to be found in any equally civilised country. The fact of occasional failure was not denied in the report of this institution. The peculiarity of the system followed, and which constituted its greatest merit, was that the principle of self-support is acted upon as far as possible. The institution met a real want, and it set an example which should be largely copied elsewhere.

Papers, Original and Selected.

WESTMINSTER FATHERS' MEETINGS.

In no part of that city of social contrasts, London, are those excellent offshoots of Ragged Schools, Mothers' Meetings, more prosperous than in mid-Westminster. As the friends labouring there were among the first to open free schools for the children of outcasts, under the title of "Schools for the Destitute," so they were among the pioneers of our Mothers' Meetings. These in the aggregate now number 71, with no less than 3,000 regular attendants. As respects Westminster alone, under the very shadow of the venerable abbey, such meetings are held in five Ragged Schools with an attendance of upwards of 400 poor women. As we have visited all these meetings, we can testify to their value, social and spiritual, many facts proving that hearts once callous through sin and misery, have, through the power of the Spirit, been softened by the story of the Cross.

But we have on so many occasions referred to Mothers' Meetings at large, that we now propose to restrict ourselves to the notice of kindred gatherings which have received far less attention than they deserve—we allude to Fathers' Meetings. Of these there are two in Westminster; they are attached to Queen Square and Perkins Rents Ragged Schools. They are both of some standing; and, though they differ in details, they are both equally well managed, and therefore equally successful.

The oldest, that held in Queen Square, was established as far back as the year 1853. It was commenced in the first Ragged School opened in Westminster, an old stable in New Pye Street having been adapted for school purposes. The Fathers' Meeting was instituted, under the auspices of Mr. Robert Baxter, who kindly defrayed all the expenses, by Mr. Allen, a most earnest Scripture reader, whose name is still fragrant in the alleys and dens of the Devil's Acre. The place was soon found to be far too small for the numbers in weekly attendance; on more than one occasion, indeed, we found above 200 men present, all of the lowest type socially and morally. Hence in 1855, in response

to a modern cry of "Rehoboth," Mr. Baxter granted the use of a Mission Hall in Queen Square, rent free, and has continued this benefit up to the present time.

The object of this meeting, though primarily religious, is also temporal; for the managers have not forgotten that men have bodies as well as souls. In this, indeed, they only imitate their Divine Master, who, if he preached the Gospel in a way no one has ever preached it, did not forget to feed the hungry and to heal the sick. By this wise combination of the secular with the religious, these meetings were a success from the very outset.

Nothing can be worse than to keep men in "leading strings;" and many a plan for the social reclamation of the poor has failed simply because all was done for them, instead of teaching the duty of self-help and self-management. This, happily, is not the case with Queen Square Fathers' Meetings, for most wisely they were from the very outset permitted to manage their own affairs, the wealthier promoters only giving sympathy or advice. The committee is therefore selected by the members; and, on the whole, the selection has been most judicious, steady workers rather than mere talkers carrying off most votes.

Since the commencement of this and the Mothers' Club, about 1,600 of both sexes have been aided in sickness; and above 200 have had their funeral expenses defrayed. The abler members visit and pray with their sick fellow-members, and convey to them the sick allowance. As every claim is settled at the close of the year, the Society is simply a yearly one, and hence no future liability is entailed.

The fathers meet every Wednesday evening at eight o'clock p.m., to transact the necessary business. At every meeting the word of God is read, and suitable addresses are given.

The following are some of the rules which were adopted at a general meeting of the members in November, 1871; which, as the result of above twenty years' experience, we give as a guide to any of our friends who may be led to establish similar meetings:—

"Any person wishing to become a member, must pay 2d. per week towards the sick, 1s. 6d. entrance fee on entering, and 2d. for rules and card. No member will be free until he has paid his contributions, viz., 1s. 6d. entrance, 2d. per week from the commencement of the year, and 1s. each death.

This society shall be governed by a committee of twelve

members, whose duty will be to meet every Wednesday evening at a quarter before 8 o'clock, to admit new members, and to receive applications from the sick, and also to report the state of the sick during the past week, and take their weekly allowance of sick pay.

The contributions shall be paid regularly every Wednesday evening, from 7 till 9; any member neglecting to do so, and by falling sick, as a defaulter he shall wait as many weeks as he is a defaulter, before he can declare on the funds after his payments are made.

Any member falling sick shall give notice in writing to the secretary, together with a doctor's certificate, and if eligible shall receive the allowance on that day week, viz.: 8s. per week for four weeks, and 4s. per week for eight weeks during the year, if required; the money to be paid by one of the committee, who shall take a receipt for the same. Such payment to commence from the day of receiving the doctor's certificate, the committee being satisfied such illness is genuine, and not brought on by drunkenness or vice.

That every sick member shall keep a slip of paper on which the visiting committee shall write their names and date of each visit. No sick member to be from home after 6 o'clock p.m. from the 21st September to the 25th March, or after 9 o'clock p.m. from the 25th March to the 21st September, or his name will be erased.

That no person can be admitted under eighteen or above fifty years of age, subject to the discretion of the committee, or living more than two miles from the place of meeting.

The committee shall select one of their number to act as secretary for the time being, whose duty it shall be to make all entries in the books. The name and address and number of every member, to be entered in a book at the commencement of every year.

Any member leaving the town or the district, must give notice to the secretary, and one week's notice must be given to the secretary before he can receive the amount due to him on his card, and any member so removing, but still wishing to remain in the society, may do so, but should he fall sick, any expense incurred in paying the sick money shall be paid by the sick member.

At the death of a free member, the wife or relatives of the said member shall receive the advantage of £8; that is to say, the committee shall see that a respectable funeral shall be given, and after the expenses are paid, the wife or relatives shall receive the remainder of the £8. Any one can have his own undertaker, and the undertaker's bill will be paid on the following Wednesday, after being presented to the committee. All notices to be directed to the secretary, within two days of the death of a member, marked outside "Notice of Death."

All members shall pay a contribution of 1s. at the death of a member, for which three weeks will be allowed to pay it in from the date of the notice being given.

Any member neglecting any of these rules, or coming to the meeting intoxicated, or using obscene language when at the meeting, shall be subject to a fine of 6d. for each offence."

The next meeting of male adults to which we propose to refer is equally valuable both socially and religiously. It is known as the Westminster Working Men's Club and Reading Rooms, and is held in connection with the One Tun Ragged School in Old Pye Street. It is open every evening, Sundays included, from 6 till half-past 10—on Sundays till 10, and on Saturdays till a quarter to 12; subscription one halfpenny per week. Founded in 1860 by Miss Adeline Cooper, the building was enlarged in 1861, and again in 1863, and this club was removed to commodious premises, which were erected for the purpose, in 1866.

In addition to a large, cheerful reading room, the following social operations are carried on most successfully:—*A Penny Bank*, open three times a week either for payments or withdrawals. Deposits during the year, £42 2s. 11d.; withdrawn, £32 11s. 6d. A *Labour Loan Society*, enrolled according to Act of Parliament, meets every Wednesday evening from 8 to 10. There are fifty-one members. Amount of capital standing to members' accounts, £190 16s. 10½d.; amount of paid-up shares withdrawn by members, £197 16s. 10½d.; loans granted at 5 per cent., £214 5s.; interest added to members' stock, 10 per cent.; in treasurer's hands £47. A *Temperance Committee* meet every Monday evening. The Public Temperance meetings are held on alternate Tuesdays. One hundred and eighty-two pledges have been taken during the year. A *Barrow Club* is conducted on Monday evening. A barrow, price 55s., is supplied to a member, who pays

1s. a week for the use of it, and at the end of fifty-five weeks it becomes his own property. Seven barrows were supplied last year—making eighty-two barrows supplied to members since the formation of the Society in 1862. A *Burial Society* (numbers, thirty-three) meets every Monday evening. Voluntary subscriptions ½d. a week. This small weekly payment entitles the relatives of a deceased member to the sum of £4 towards the funeral expenses, and is intended to discourage "friendly meetings," which, being held at public-houses, generally lead to excesses of various kinds. £12 were paid by this little Burial Society—£4 to the relatives of each deceased member. In connection with this society, we regret to record the death of a young member, "the only son of his mother, who is a widow." During his illness his great desire was to have the Scriptures read to him. His last intelligible words were, "Kiss me, mother—I am going—Jesus is waiting for me." A *Lending Library* numbers nearly 431 volumes. 207 books have been lent out during the year. The charge of one penny entitles a member to keep a book a fortnight—this money is expended in repairs, and also in new books. The *Club Library* numbers over 1,200 volumes for the sole use of members of the Club.

Nor are the spiritual needs of the members forgotten. Thus, a *Bible Class*, conducted by General Alexander, is much enjoyed by those who attend. It is free to all, and a side door is open from a quarter before eight to ten minutes past. The attendance averages from thirty to forty. A *Sunday Evening Service and Mid-day Wednesday Prayer Meeting* are also attended by most attentive audiences.

As we have watched these Fathers' Meetings from the outset, we gladly testify that, next to those Ragged Schools of which they were offshoots, nothing has done more to civilise a miserable district long known by the terrible name of the "Devil's Acre." Latterly this locality has much improved, for Victoria Street and the Metropolitan Railway, which run through the very heart of this district, by pulling down many alleys have driven away those burglars and coiners by which it was tenanted. Still, if less criminal, there is yet a large poor or vicious population—the "Lodging Houses for Travellers," in Old Pye Street, contributing more than their quota to the sin and misery which are still born and bred there.

It is for classes like these—or rather for that portion which earnestly desires to quit this "Slough of Despond"—that the Queen Square and One Tun Men's Meetings were devised. That their past usefulness may be but as a foreshadow of their future success, is our earnest prayer. Nor can we doubt that, with the common sense shown in the various plans employed, and the blessing of the Most High on the combined efforts, that they will long continue a course which, for *present* and permanent results, has had few parallels.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES AMONG POOR CHILDREN.

BY THE REV. JAMES WELLS, GLASGOW.

I WISH to give some of the results of ten years' experience among home mission children in Glasgow. I need not try to avoid the appearance of egotism; that belongs to the subject, for a man cannot naturally describe his experiences without speaking in the first person. The subject has many sides—social, literary, and so on—but I shall keep to that side of it which most concerns us as Christian workers among the young. This, then, is the special point I propose considering—what are the qualifications which experience proves to be most needful for success in such work?

Experience has taught me nothing more impressively than this—Give us Christian workers, who, however, humble and unlearned, are moved by genuine compassion, and the poor children will come flocking around us in hundreds, and remain with us, and prove open to Christian influences. This attractive power of a loving spirit over the very worst of them is a settled point. It very seldom fails; and the lower down you go in the social scale, the greater is the success, because kindness is a greater rarity among them, and its magnetic power is correspondingly increased. A missionary lately visited every family in an unpromising district. He found that about the half of the parents were non-church-going, but that almost all the children of these parents were attending Sabbath Schools and Foundry Boys' meetings, and that they were greatly interested in them, while some of the parents were catching the contagion of the children's interest.

The fact to which I am most anxious to bear my joyful testimony is, that these children are very approachable, and full of hope for the Church. Amid provoking delays, the strife of tongues, and general bewilderment about national education, this fact, I think, should be often repeated, and proclaimed from the house-tops in all our towns—*If our churches have compassion on them, they may get and keep the thousands of our neglected youth.* Wherever a real interest is taken in them, you may calculate on having at least the poorest children under your influence.

The Evangelist tells us that our Lord took up the little children in his

arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them. You notice that the gestures amount to a prolonged expression of peculiar tenderness. Cherish the same spirit, and the children will own its power, and surrender themselves to you. Meet them on the ground of our common humanity, uniting, as Christ did, the human and the divine, making the human the stepping-stone to the divine; and, by your manifested friendly interest in them, leading them on to the Divine Saviour, whose compassion for the young you but feebly reflect.

Many arguments on behalf of such an appreciation crowd into the mind of any one who is familiar with the subject. For instance, when looking at a company of poor children, I have been often struck, and literally detained, by noticing the large proportion of interesting and promising faces. The poorest children are by no means the most poorly endowed in mind and heart. Their poverty adds in some ways to their endowments. It imparts vigour and hardihood, and, as has been truly said, "Their wits are sharpened on the grindstone of necessity." Every worker is delighted by discovering rare gifts, and by quickening them into exercise.

Then one soon feels that many most noble young hearts beat under rags, and that they return the affection bestowed upon them. I rather think that in the more favoured classes of society, the children are after all not much better, though much better off. "Have you very bad children here?" I once asked the chaplain of a penitentiary. "No, sir,' he replied; "they are just boys, and that explains everything."

We should not only expect decided conversions, but further, that several in every hundred will turn out eminently influential and useful men and women. Such an expectation might be superabundantly justified by facts, if it were wise to do so here.

"I wonder how you can have patience with such a set of boys," was once said to one of our teachers. "Oh," was the reply, "I fancy that there may be a Sir Colin Campbell among them."

I dwell on this peculiar Christian appreciation of the poorest children, because the want of it is our chief complaint, and explains more than anything else the present low estate of Sabbath School work. Hence these agencies secure so few gentlemen and ladies of culture and experience. We have only an elect remnant of such teachers who remain loyal to the attachment of their youth, and in riper years, when others fade, are, like the palm-tree, still flourishing and fruitful.

The better appreciation of Christian effort among the young in America manifests itself not only in their fine buildings for Sabbath Schools, but also in the fact that many of their foremost citizens devote themselves to this work for life, and study it as a sacred art and science. Teachers of this stamp would certainly supply the missing link between the Sabbath School and the Church by prosperous Bible Classes, and thus vastly increase the efficiency of all our agencies. It should also be added that alienated parents are most easily drawn to the Church by interesting their children.

Discrimination as to things is adaptation of means to the end. Our

motto must be—Adapt, adapt, adapt! You are all familiar with the success of the Foundry Boys' Society, and it is largely owing to their having made a difference in the sense I am now explaining. The children at once perceived that every part of the service was for them, and a feeling of delighted surprise attached them to the meetings. The cure of souls, especially of young souls, like the cure of bodies, needs varying applications for varying conditions. But at this point a false conservatism threatens to intimidate and maim us. He is the true conservative who cleaves with all his convictions and affections to the unchanging and imperishable faith, and then strives by diverse methods to lay it alongside of all classes. More than any other Christian workers, we must face about and strike out on all sides, and seek to be rich in inventions, and fertile in expedients, "making a difference."

We should make a difference, not only between children and adults, but also between children and children. I am convinced that we must appeal to classes, such as Foundry Boys, Tobacco Boys, Carter Boys, &c. This has been done with marked success in London. We should take advantage of the *esprit de corps* of classes, and even of their class prejudices and antipathies. It is well to have every regard to their individuality in providing education and recreation during the week, and religious instruction on the Sabbath; else many of the boys especially cannot be successfully approached.

The Bishop of London once said, "The Sabbath School has saved the manufacturing districts." The Earl of Shaftesbury has said, "To you Sabbath School teachers is entrusted the future of the British Empire." These children have great energy, and every year is adding to the social and political power of their class. It may become a question whether our best-loved institutions shall live or die. At all events, Christians should be foremost among patriots, and the love of country should conspire more than heretofore with the love of Christ to make the ear of the Church attentive unto the cry of the child.

But far weightier considerations press upon you, for you desire to see them saved. Hope mingles with your fear, for you know that it is not the will of your Father in heaven that one of these little ones should perish. I wish to bear my strongest testimony to the religious experiences of poor children. They have more thoughts and fears about their souls than everybody gives them credit for. The statement of Tertullian is specially true of children, "The soul is naturally religious." Why should it seem an incredible thing that God should convert these children, and that they should be known to enjoy the common salvation? In our creed let this article have a place, "I believe in the salvability of the young." Often state the offer of the Gospel to them in a way they cannot misunderstand. Let them feel that they must receive or reject an offered Saviour. Tell them what a sin and shame it is in them to reject such a loving Saviour. Urge them to decide for Christ. The chief end of the Sabbath School teacher is to save them with fear.

BRACKLEY STREET RAGGED SCHOOL, GOLDEN LANE.

THE way in which some Ragged Schools are supported and worked is somewhat remarkable. Thus, for example, the Ragged School in Nichol Street, Bethnal Green, may be regarded as the Territorial Mission of Union Chapel, Islington. Thus, too, the Ragged Schools in New Inn Yard and Willow Walk are mainly supported and taught by members of the Society of Friends.

As with schools, so with teachers. For whilst some Western Ragged Schools are taught by ladies of noble birth, others number among their voluntary workers cabmen and private soldiers. In one school, indeed—that in Church Place, Paddington Green—ten Christian butchers are numbered among the teachers. But whatever their social status, they all equally yearn to win the young for Jesus.

But the most unique Ragged School as respects funds and helpers is that held in Brackley Street, Golden Lane. For the support of this school and mission is undertaken by the firm of Messrs. I. and R. Morley, the heads and *employés* of which subscribe above £500 per annum for its maintenance. From the *Christian World* we glean the following interesting particulars of this Ragged School and mission.

It appears that a few years ago the *employés* in the house of I. and R. Morley, of Wood Street, stimulated by the Christian energy of the head of firm, looked about for some locality where they might render Christian service to those who are "out of the way." They turned their attention to Golden Lane, and in an unobtrusive way they gathered together as many children and adults as they could induce to come to receive instruction in the ways of truth and of God.

The thing grew; and, before long, a large, rough building offered itself, consisting of plain brick walls with wooden roof, but capable of being adapted to mission work in such a locality even better than a place of greater pretensions. This building Mr. Samuel Morley, M.P., purchased at a cost of £1,000, and it was transformed into the Brackley Street Mission Hall. A well-qualified missionary to work in the neighbourhood was secured. Religious services were commenced on Sundays and Tuesdays, conducted by the missionary and gentlemen from Wood Street. A penny-a-week Day School was established for both boys and girls. The operations of the Ragged Sunday School were increased considerably by the young men of the establishment in Wood Street, assisted by ladies, many of whom are their relatives. From time to time there has been added to the above agencies various others—such as Mothers' Meeting, a Temperance Society, a Band of Hope, and a Penny Bank. Weekly entertainments, concerts and lectures, have also been given, and a Drum and Fife Band organised.

The annual tea meeting of this school and mission was recently held. The building had been transformed as by magic into a beautiful assembly hall. The walls were covered with banners, emblazoned shields were sus-

pended before the windows, illuminated mottoes were arranged in every available place, and evergreens were entwined around the pillars and the front of the platform. Above the platform was the illuminated device, "The Lord hath done great things for us;" in front of it, in large white letters on a red ground, were the suggestive words, "No order without authority; no happiness without order." "Glory to God in the highest," in splendid device, was stretched across the beam. In the recess behind the platform was a winter scene, drawn in bold outline and excellent perspective. The general effect of these decorations was of a far higher order than is generally witnessed, and was the sole work of one of the porters in the house of I. and R. Morley. The partners, heads of departments, clerks, warehousemen, and the lads were there when Mr. S. Morley took the chair as president. It was a scene of great moral beauty. For here was the head of one of the largest commercial houses in the City, with the *employés* of various grades, banded together for the promotion of the moral and spiritual good of one of the most wretched districts of this great city. What an odd assemblage of faces were there! Men of the bull-dog type, and of the low, shuffling type, some also of an open brow and earnest look, and one black brother; women, whose appearance told of squalor and poverty, intemperance and sin, but some also with honest, healthy faces.

Mr. Morley recapitulated the items of work done there, in which he said that there are 230 children in the Ragged Sunday School, 170 in the Day School, and about 100 in attendance at the Mothers' Meeting. Mr. Minchin, the missionary, spoke also of the good *they* might do who had themselves received good, and finished by giving them some very broad *hints* as to the non-attendance of some of them at the religious services, and of their getting them there only once a year. It is worthy of note, however, that Mr. Minchin gets to them in their homes, as many as 7,000 being under regular visitation.

The report for last year states that "it is in the nature of the Brackley Street Mission that it should deal with the circumstances as well as with the souls of the people. How to blend this double object, and to make temporal aid a means of grace and blessing to the recipients, is the problem to which the missionary addresses himself." The same document reports an item of great interest, viz., that, "to supply a need long felt, an association of professing Christians was formed in April last, and held its first meeting on the 1st of May. It is called 'The Brackley Street Christian Association,' and its object is to band together in Christian fellowship those of our number who profess and call themselves Christians, and give evidence of a change of heart by striving to walk in the ways of God's commandments." Frequent meetings for exhortation and prayer are held, and about seventy have already enrolled their names as members.

At a time when everywhere, east, west, north, and south, there is a cry for more teachers, we think that the example thus set by the young men of Messrs. Morley is worthy of imitation. Surely in most City firms there are qualified Christian young men who might establish and support a similar mission to old and young; or if not, who might take some poor existing Ragged School under their wing, agreeing to supply both funds

and workers. In this way a growing social and spiritual want might be met; and probably outlying districts, now so many moral deserts, might be evangelised.

The only question which remains is this: Is the work worth doing? in other words, Has the Lord bidden us to "occupy till he come"? If so, ought not the experiment to be made at once?

FUTURE OF THE LONDON RAGGED SCHOOLS.

THE Committee of the London Ragged School Union, of which Lord Shaftesbury is chairman, have been considering very deliberately what course ought to be taken in the present crisis, in order to carry out the great ends for which the Ragged School movement was begun. They have come to a decided conclusion that there is still an imperative obligation on them to prosecute their movement with unabated diligence and liberality.

When the schools were started they were called "Ragged Schools," to make it obvious that it was the very lowest class of children that were sought to be benefited, and they were made free because in many cases the parents of the children could not, and in other cases they would not, pay even the smallest sum to secure for them the benefits of education, or any other benefits whatever. It was even found necessary, in many instances, to provide food and other things to induce them to attend. The great object of these schools was not merely to give the children the elements of a secular education, but to bring them under the saving influence of the Gospel, and secure their welfare for time and for eternity.

The establishment of School Boards, with power to compel the attendance of children, and to purchase sites and erect schools wherever required, has in some degree altered the aspect of the case as it regards Ragged Schools. There has arisen in some minds a feeling that they will be less needed, in consequence of the operations of the Boards; and likewise a feeling that contributions will be less willingly supplied, partly as not being so necessary, and partly because the rates will be an additional charge on contributors for educational purposes.

On reviewing the whole circumstances of the case, the Committee have come to think that ultimately there will be less need for the Day Schools of the Society, but that as the absorption of the lowest class of children into Day Schools by the Boards will be attended with considerable difficulty and delay, they ought to be supported in the meantime wherever required. And instead of diminishing other operations, such as Ragged Sunday Schools, Penny Banks, Bands of Hope, Clothing Clubs, Mothers' Meetings, and Evening Classes, these ought to be more energetically supported than ever, and additional efforts should be made in other ways, including Infant Nurseries, Labourers' Clubs, Ragged Churches, and Children's Churches, Medical and Gospel Missions, Parents' Lectures, and Prizes for good

conduct to boys and girls remaining for twelve months in their situations, and giving satisfaction to their employers.

And inasmuch as in the schools maintained by the Boards the religious education must be very defective, the Committee will do their best to supplement it by other means. If necessary, they will employ paid agents for this purpose; but meanwhile, they will see what can be done by the three thousand volunteer teachers who have so long engaged in the work.

Such are the arrangements which Lord Shaftesbury and his friends are preparing to carry out in connection with the Ragged School Union for London. Whatever may be found best in other places, there can be little doubt that for the enormous mass of London, the resolution come to is a wise one. It is eminently satisfactory to find that the Gospel element is not to be excluded from the machinery brought to bear for the recovery of the unfortunate children so sadly neglected. Little can, indeed, be looked for for them from the alphabet and the multiplication table without something higher and more efficient. The very confinement and restraint of a school life will of itself rather irritate than allay their wild and restless spirit; it must be accompanied with something that shall have more power to excite sorrow for the past, joy in the present, and hope for the future. We trust that entering on this phase the Ragged School movement will acquire a fresh impulse; and if there is to be less need for the efforts of its agents in the direction of mere secular instruction, we hope that with renewed energy and faith they will devote themselves to the moral and spiritual region which, to so large an extent, will yet remain for them to occupy.—*Dr. Guthrie's Sunday Magazine.*

STEPNEY YOUTH'S MISSION.

THIS Mission was established at Stepney in 1869, when two rooms were hired in a neighbourhood abounding with children. At first one room was sufficient; and there, every night, were held services for lads and boys. Our numbers at first were small, ten or twelve being the average; but the love of Jesus, told simply and with power, soon brought others, who came more out of curiosity than anything else; and many were, by God's grace, made to feel their sins and to flee to Christ for pardon and salvation. Very soon, however, one room became too small; and one Sunday, after a Special Prayer Meeting had been held, imploring the Lord to fill the place with anxious souls, the folding doors had to be opened to admit the fifty-one boys clamouring outside for admittance.

To describe the scenes that occurred nightly would be impossible. Picture to yourselves the lads cramming every form, the sideboard, tables; and the little ones were even perched on the mantel-shelf; and when there was no more sitting room, they sat on the floor. Night after night we had to turn many away, which went greatly against our hearts; but this was not all: Satan began to work; the neighbours began to complain bitterly of the noise caused by the lads gathering in the streets, and often my heart has ached

to hear men (fathers themselves) knocking at the door, requesting us to leave off, and swearing they would stop it if we did not. One Sunday evening in November there was a tremendous rush to get into the Mission Rooms, and some difficulty was experienced in holding a meeting. The following night was dreadful; some 200 lads and boys came, and when they found there was not sufficient room, they commenced yelling, hooting, fighting, and throwing stones. Several were hurt; one boy went home with his coat torn in half; but again the Lord came to the help of the few against the mighty, or we could not have stood up against them.

About a week after this, we believe, one of the boys was truly converted, and several convinced of sin. By January, 1870, we had fifteen Christian lads professing, as the fruits of the Mission. These lads held a prayer-meeting of their own after the regular meetings of the evening were over; most of these had been the worst lads attending the Mission.

About this time we started a Lads' Visiting Society. Each lad had a district allotted him, and every Lord's day he might have been seen, tracts in hand, setting forth on his errand of love. The tracts were left at the houses of the children, and by this we hoped not only to gain the children, but also the parents; the lads also had opportunities of speaking of the love of Jesus, what God had done for them, and the happiness of a Christian life.

After long waiting we were enabled to procure a good-sized loft; this we made as comfortable as we could, and on March 7th, 1870, we opened it. The news spread rapidly that we had secured a larger place, and the boys flocked in great numbers; every corner and available place was crammed, over 200 boys being present, and as many outside clamouring for admittance.

Towards the end of the same month a devotional meeting was held among the Christian lads, they telling what God and the Bible had done for them. One lad, fourteen years of age, said, "Well, boys, since I have been a Christian, I can say that I have felt Jesus to be my best Friend. Whenever I am in trouble, I pray to him, and he always helps me. Before I loved Jesus I was a very bad boy, but not too bad for Jesus. I hope all you boys will give him your hearts, and then you will go to heaven." Another said: "I have felt very happy since I have been a Christian. I have many things to put up with in my daily life, but when I think of Jesus it makes me so happy. I hope and trust every one here to-night will become a Christian for Jesus' sake." Another, trembling very much, said: "I was a very bad boy to my mother, and everybody hated me, but when I gave my heart to Jesus, what a change it made! I love mother now and mother loves me, and everything seems changed. Even my playmates like me better since I have been a Christian. I hope you will all try and go to heaven. 'Jesus loves you, this I know,' and I should not like to be on the right hand and see you on the left at the last day. I hope you will come to Jesus." Several others gave similar addresses, and the simple testimony of these lads had a wonderful effect upon the meeting.

For over a year the work was carried on in the places mentioned, when we removed to Hertford Place, Globe Road, Mile End, and fitted up a workshop at the cost of nearly £200. It is capable of holding 300 children.

Last summer our Open-Air Services were another cause for great praise. On Sundays meetings were held in the most crowded thoroughfares of the Mile End Road; week-night services, two or three times a week, in the Old Ford and Bethnal Green Roads and Muddy Lane, a very low locality, and also in the neighbourhood of the Mission. A great feature in our Open-Air Services is the help of our lads, whose singing draws large congregations of seldom less than fifty; and by this means we are enabled to set before many who never enter a place of worship, the unsearchable riches of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The people, we find, will stop and listen to the singing of the boys, perhaps without any intention of staying to the service, but the singing has been with such power as to keep them the whole time. Many are the good shakes of the hand we get, and "God bless you," said one; "I like to hear those lads sing."

One night we separated about fifteen of the worst from the others, and took them into a room by themselves; then they behaved more like wild beasts than human beings. At last I got them to tell me something about their lives; I found I was in the company of two thieves, one who never went to bed without having a fight, and even offered to fight me; four lads obtained a living anyhow they could—the day before they hired a barrow of an old woman, went out and collected old iron, for which they got 1s. 4d.; they then got hold of a little boy and sent him back with the barrow without paying for it. We have several attending the mission who have not long been out of prison—their very look betrays them—with their hair cropped short. Most of them are positively in rags, hardly decent enough to come into the Mission. Some of these lads have been brought to Christ; ah! and glorious Christians they make. One lad, upon my asking him how it was he became a Christian, said, "After I heard you that Wednesday evening, I went home, but could not sleep all night. I got up early and went to work, but could not. I left off work early and lost a quarter of a day, which was 4½d., on purpose to come here early and say I wanted to be a Christian and give up all."

Our Branch Mission for Girls, situated in Heath Street, Stepney, has long been too small. It is superintended by the treasurer, and the Lord has done great things by him. Many girls have been brought to put their faith in Jesus, some of them, like the lads, having been the worst of characters, and only been plucked just in time from the streets.

And now I think my readers will be greatly surprised to hear that what they have read of the Lord's work in our Mission has been done by those who are daily engaged in business, and give their services voluntarily in the evening. It is not too much to say that we have not one paid worker among something like twenty, and we could give work to as many more. One of our greatest drawbacks is the lack of labourers. We thank God for what he has done through the feeble efforts of a few of his flock, and when we hear 300 lads' voices in our Mission singing—

"Yes, Jesus loves me, this I know,
For the Bible tells me so,"

who were once found playing in the gutter, or idling about the street, we take courage, and go on.

A. H. KERWIN.

HOW A ROBBER WAS SAVED.

In a large lonely house situated in the south of England, there lived, many years ago, Mrs. P—, a lady whose only companions were two maid-servants. Though far away from all human habitations, they dwelt in peace and safety, for they trusted in God and feared no evil under his protecting care. It was the lady's custom to pass around the house with her maid-servants every night, and see that all the doors and windows were properly secured, and then to lie down and sleep in peace under the shadow of the Almighty, who was her trust and her shield.

One night she had accompanied her maids about the house as usual, and having ascertained that all was safe, they left her in the passage close to her room, and then went to their own apartment, which was quite distant, at the other side of the house. As the lady, thus left alone, opened the door into her room, she distinctly saw the feet of a man under her bed. Her feelings may be imagined. Her servants were far away, and could not hear her if she called for help; she might be murdered before they could arrive, even if they did hear her; and if they were there, three weak and defenceless women would have been no match for an armed and desperate burglar. Danger was all around her; flight was impracticable; earthly refuge seemed to fail. What *did* she do? She did what it was always safe to do—she trusted in the Lord. She knew that she had a God to go to, who never leaves nor forsakes his confiding saints; and so she possessed her soul in patience and in peace. Making no outcry, and giving no intimation that she observed anything wrong, she quietly closed the door, locked it on the inside as she was in the habit of doing, leisurely brushed her hair, seeking the while the help and guidance of the Lord whom she served. Putting on her dressing-gown, she took her Bible and calmly sat down and read the word of God, that word which is quick and powerful and sharper than a two-edged sword. Guided of the Holy Spirit, she selected a portion of Scripture, which recites the watchful care of God over his people by night and by day. She read aloud. Never was a chapter so read before. In that lonely house, with a desperate robber hidden in the room, that helpless woman read out the mighty promises of Him whose word can never fail. Her heart gained strength as she read the words of truth, and closing the book she kneeled and prayed to God, and prayed as she had never prayed before. She told the Lord her helplessness and need; she commended herself and her servants in their defencelessness and loneliness to the care of a protecting God; she dwelt upon their utter lack of all human defence, and clung to the sacred promises which were given for comfort in the hours of trouble and distress. She lingered long in supplication, for it was her hour of need, and she came boldly to the throne of grace, for every other refuge was in vain. At last she rose from her knees, put out her candle and laid down upon her bed—but not to sleep.

Soon she became conscious that the man was standing by her bedside. He begged her not to be alarmed, and said, "I am come here to rob

the house, and if necessary to kill you; and I have companions out in the garden ready to obey my call for help. But after hearing the words you have read and the prayers you have uttered, no power on earth could induce me to hurt you or to touch a thing in your house. If you had given the slightest alarm or token of resistance, I had fully determined to murder you, and it was God's guidance that led you to pursue the course you took. You must still remain perfectly quiet, and not attempt to interfere with me. I shall now give a signal to my companions which they will understand, and then we will go away and you may sleep in peace, for I give you my solemn word no one shall harm you, and not the smallest thing belonging to you shall be disturbed." He then went to the window and opened it, and whistled softly, as a signal to his comrades to disperse to a distance, and returning to the bedside of the lady, who had neither spoken nor moved throughout the whole, he said, "Now I am going. Your prayer has been heard, and no disaster will befall you. But I never heard such words before; I must have the book you read out of." And taking her Bible, willingly enough given, he bade her good night and disappeared through the open window.

Directly all was quiet the lady composed herself to sleep, upheld by that faith and grace which had so signally sustained her in her hour of trial, and awoke in the morning to give thanks to Him who had covered her with his feathers, and preserved her from "the terror by night," and been to her a rock of refuge and a fortress of deliverance in her hour of need.

But how fared the robber? He came for treasure, and he got it. He sought gold and silver, and gained the law of God that is better than thousands of silver and gold. He carried that away with him which outweighs all treasures, and shall outlast the world—the Word of God, that liveth and abideth for ever. The praying woman remembered him before the throne, but neither she nor any one else could trace him in all his course of sin or sorrow through the world. But God followed him, the Holy Spirit pursued him, and the message of God's mercy was in his hands, and for the result we must wait in hope.

In the month of April, 1867, an aged lady, Mrs. Hannah P——, fell asleep in Christ in the city of Boston. She was a native of England, and the daughter of one of the godly Methodist women of olden time. In her old age her memory lingered lovingly about the scenes of her youth, and frequently she would relate to the younger members of her family the tales of her early English life.

One time, she said, when she was but a little girl, she went with her mother to attend a meeting of the Bible Society, or some religious body in Yorkshire. After several clergymen and others had addressed the meeting, a man arose, who stated that he was employed as one of the book-hawkers of the society, and told the story of that midnight scene, as a testimony to the living, saving energy of Almighty God, declaring that through the influence of that Bible and the prayers of that Christian woman the robber was led to Christ for mercy. He paused in his narration, and as the

assembly, thrilled by his story, waited breathless for the conclusion, he said, "*I was that man!*" Instantly an elderly lady rose from her seat in the midst of the congregation, and quietly said, "It is all quite true; I was the lady," and sat down again.

Many years had elapsed since the lady and the robber parted, and she had never heard of him before that day. But the Lord had watched and guided, led and saved that sinful man, and he stood forth a monument of the guiding providence and saving grace of God.

Poet's Corner.

HONOUR BORN OF DUTY.

BY LILLY E. BARR.

God reaches us good things with our own hands:
Life's common road hath angels in the way,
Whose veiled faces hinder not commands
That comfort, warn, or bless us as we stray.
The paths of honour and of duty meet,
Though oft we tread them with unwitting feet.

When fair Rebekah in the sunset's glow,
Went with the maidens to her father's well,
Of golden rings and bracelets did she know?
What power did her sweet complaisance compel?
Had she a dream of the great husband's name,
Whose love should give her an immortal fame?

And through Samaria's gates how oft had passed
The woman with her waterpot to draw?
But, oh! the day of mercy came at last,
And Christ sat waiting though she did not know.
How oft our erring feet have had to stay
Because "an angel met us in the way."

Most often in the common household ways,
(The sameness of whose duties doubles cares,)
Weeping is turned into a song of praise,
And angels stoop and bless us unawares.
No road so hid and lonely but God sees
And can enlarge its borders if he please.

'Twas not to seers that dwelt apart from men,
Visions and mandates of his spirit came;
His prophets knew the cares of life—and then
Their hearts and tongues were touched with living flame;
So in the way of duty may our feet
With the most surety, honour hope to meet.

Teachers' Column.

WEEK-DAY WORK.

No Ragged School teacher can do all his work with his scholars, any more than he can do all his work for them, in one day of the week. His instructions will prove of little account if he gives no study to his lesson except on Sunday; and his influence will be comparatively slight if he shows no personal interest in those of his charge save as he meets them in the class. Indeed, more impression is made by a single hour's work with a scholar in his home or place of week-day occupation, when he is off his guard as to religious appeals, than by many hours of labour on successive Sundays, when the scholar expects to be laboured with for his soul's welfare.

A teacher in a Sunday School had a class of five seemingly thoughtless boys, whom he had long sought, vainly, to lead to the Saviour by faithful Sabbath pleadings. At length he came to see the possibilities of week-day work for his scholars; and after earnest prayer for a blessing on his new endeavour, he called on all of the five boys on the same afternoon, and pleaded and prayed with them individually for their soul's sake.

Not long afterwards one of those boys was sick with fever, and in delirium he called for his Sunday School teacher. So continuous was this call, and so uncontrollable was the boy by his family, that the teacher was sent for. No sooner did he enter the sick-room than the boy's delirium left him. The light of reason returned to his face, and he was himself once more. He asked to be left alone with his teacher, and when they two were by themselves he spoke freely of his feelings. He said that he knew he was to die, but he had no fears of death, for he had rest in Christ as his Saviour. Then he referred to that week-day call of the teacher, and said that at that time he was induced to yield himself to Him who died for him. So confessing his faith, he was left by his loving teacher, and no sooner had that teacher passed from the room than the delirium of fever was again upon him, and it never left him until he fell asleep in Jesus.

Another, and another, and yet another of those boys—four of the five in all—were apparently led through God's blessing on that one week-day's work of the teacher to put their trust in Jesus. All the Sundays he had given to them seemed as nothing until that week-day's work was added.

Teacher, are your scholars possibly waiting for some such prayerful soul-seeking visit to them in their homes?

It is said of the earliest Christian disciples in their labours for their Master, not that their voices were heard once a week, and that in the Lord's house, but that "*daily* in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and to preach Jesus Christ." Is not their example in this to be followed now to advantage?

LOOK TO YOUR MOTIVES.

An invalid was lying mournfully reviewing the past. She had been very fond of teaching, and for a time as teacher, and then as superintendent, she had worked several years in what was to her a delightful employment. Then sickness had come, and first one thing and then another had to be discontinued; and now after many years of suffering she knew she should never walk again.

Then she felt how little she had really done for God's glory. She loved activity, and it would have been irksome to her to be unemployed; she loved children, and her delight was to be among them. She could not but be aware that she had the gift of superintending, and she liked to bring the rough element into order;

and now she knew that she could not have had a right motive in her work, or it would not have been so long before she could say, "Thy will be done." She had need to come to her Heavenly Father and beg him to wash her imperfect services in the blood of Jesus.

And now she would affectionately urge all teachers to examine their motives. It is not wrong to like to be employed for employment's sake, for God has given to some of us a vast amount of activity, but we must not take credit to ourselves for being laborious, when we should consider it anything but pleasant to be obliged to always be in the house on Sunday afternoons.

There was a young lady who had a class in —— Ragged Sunday School. She had not taken it very long, when domestic arrangements required that she should stay at home with her grandmother, who was old and rather deaf, so that the servant might attend a place of worship in the afternoon; another teacher was found to take her class for that part of the day, and she was to continue it herself in the morning. How did Miss S—— behave under the circumstances? she who had been praised for being so active in God's service; for wet or cold never kept her away from school. I am sorry to say that she was so vexed at being obliged to give up, and she was so inattentive to her grandmother that the old lady soon complained that it was very dull to be left alone with her, so her mother stayed at home herself, and Miss S— was again able to teach her class both morning and afternoon. This young lady was considered an excellent teacher, she was so bright and cheerful that her boys said it was "jolly" to be in her class. Was it not a pity that she was not bright at home?

We have need to pray with the Psalmist, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

A. H.

Children's Gallery.

"I WANT TO LOVE YOU."

A LITTLE Irish girl was taken to a Ragged School, but acted so badly that the teacher felt obliged to dismiss her from the school. This she did, saying—

"You are a very naughty girl! I want to love you, but I cannot."

The naughty girl went home, but the words of the teacher rang in her ears, and she said to herself: "Teacher wants to love me. I wonder why that is? What can make her want to love me?"

These thoughts made her weep. She cried all night, and the next morning went back to the Ragged School again, and said,—

"Please, teacher, try me once more, I won't be a naughty girl again."

"Yes," said the teacher, "I will try you; but what makes you want to come back?"

The girl told her how the words "I want to love you" had rung in her ears, and melted her heart. Then the teacher told the poor girl how it was for Christ's sake she wanted to love her, and that Jesus wished to love her too, if she would let him make her pure and good.

This touched the Irish girl's heart still more deeply. She wept again, and offered her heart to the Saviour. He heard her prayer, pardoned her sins, and made her happy.

Children, Jesus wants to take you and love you with an everlasting love. This is wonderful, but it is true. Will you not then give yourself to him and love him?

ELLA.

A BETTER HOME.

T. F. was turned out of doors when very young by an unkind stepmother. His parents were great drunkards, and this poor boy had to sleep under the dark arches in Farringdon Road, unless he could steal as much during the day as would enable him to pay his lodging at the Thieves' Kitchen in Fetter Lane. While he was thus engaged, viz., stealing wood from a hoarding in Farringdon Road, he was apprehended by a police constable, and sent to Field Lane Ragged Industrial School. From a short time after admission he showed many signs of improvement, and seemed to excel in everything. He made great progress in his education as well as in industrial pursuits. Endeared to all his teachers as well as to his companions, he was quite a favourite with every one.

Taken ill rather suddenly, he was removed to an hospital, and gradually sank, but not before leaving the testimony behind him that he was "a brand snatched from the burning."

A very short time before his death he said to his teacher as well as he could articulate,—

"I will soon be with Jesus."

He rallied a little afterwards, and called for a companion in the hospital.

"Baker, are you coming *home?*"

"Oh," said his companion, "you are not well enough."

"Yes, I am," he articulated, "come home with me."

"Is it to the Boys' Home?"

"Oh, no," said he, "I am going to a better home than that. See! look, there is Jesus! I see him! Nurse, come, come, home!" and instantly his happy spirit had fled into the hands of Him who gave it.

Editor's Note-Book.

AT EASE IN ZION.

"At ease in Zion,"—is not this the description of multitudes who name the name of Christ? There may not always be "revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries," but even where these are absent, there is "high living," luxury of the table or the wardrobe.

"At ease in Zion!" Yes; there is the shrinking from hard service; from "spending and being spent;" from toil and burden-bearing, and conflict; from self-sacrifice and noble adventure for the Master's sake. There is conformity to the world instead of conformity to Christ. There is a following afar off instead of keeping pace with him whom we profess to follow. There is a laying down instead of a taking up of the Cross; or there is a *lining* of the Cross, lest it should gall our shoulders as we carry it; or there is an adorning of it that it may suit the taste and the manners of an intellectual and refined age. Anything but the bare and simple Cross! For we think that we have made the straight gate wider, and the narrow way broader, so as to be able to walk more comfortably to the kingdom. —*Dr. H. Bonar.*

BROAD OR NARROW—WHICH?

Indifference to error, tolerance of evil, smoothing down the ridge between true and false teaching, whether by the press or the pulpit,—these are things very common in our day, as proofs of liberality and large-mindedness. But the Lord says, "which thing I hate." To be "broad" and "wide" is the universal boast—to be "narrow" and "strait" the worst of reproaches. As if "broad" and "wide" were not the words of the Master's condemnation; as if it had not been said, "Enter in at

the *strait* gate: for *wide* is the gate, and *broad* is the way, that leadeth to death; and *strait* is the gate, and *narrow* the way, that leadeth to life."

SPIRITUAL ELECTRICITY.

THE power of electric action lies all quiescent and asleep in a thousand forms and things about us, and we see nothing of it. Put a few plates of zinc into a little acid, connect them by wires, and attach to each of the two extremes a wire to serve, the one as a positive, and the other as a negative, and you develop a power to carry your thoughts to the ends of the world on wings of lightning.

The power to produce this electric action is quiescent in the zinc and acid while they are separate. So is it with the power of the gospel; it is latent until the truth and the heart are brought together, until Christ and the soul have met each other. Then, when Christ has been received into the soul by faith, the power is developed, which by tongue or pen, or life, goes forth to all the world in Christian testimony.—*W. E. Boardman.*

Our Library Table.

Romance of the Streets. By a LONDON RAMBLER. London: Hodder and Stoughton.

This work contains an able digest of the work and the fruits of Ragged Schools. Most of the incidents narrated confirm Lord Byron's dictum, "Truth is strange—stranger than fiction." But as many have come under our own notice—were, in fact, first recorded in our pages—we can vouch for their truth, however startling to those who have never penetrated the by-ways of London. We hail this contribution to street romance with much satisfaction; for it is pleasing, while some persons are *hinting* that Ragged Schools were a mistake at the first, and a failure in the sequel, to find an onlooker, not identified with our movement, supplying such striking facts to show that success has tracked our mission like its very shadow.

Story of the Little Boys. By A. O. CHARLES. London: Nisbet and Co.

This little volume gives a graphic account of the Little Boys' Home at Farningham from its inception to the present time. We are specially pleased with the chapter devoted to "Sundays" at the Home; for it shows how possible it is to make the Lord's day attractive and full of life even to little ones without infringing on its sacred duties.

British Flag. London: Mackintosh.

By earnest exhortation, as well as by striking narrative, this serial seeks to commend the gospel of the grace of God to our soldiers and sailors. As many former Ragged Scholars are either attached to the regular army or to the royal or mercantile marine, we cordially recommend this magazine for circulation amongst those classes. For it is not only calculated to interest but to awaken or deepen religious impressions in classes exposed to most terrible temptations.

Child's Companion. London: Religious Tract Society.

This friend of our childhood, in imitation of other children's magazines, appears in a new and attractive dress. But though its garb is changed, it has not lost sight of its ancient purpose to win juveniles for Jesus. Untainted by that "sensationalism" now unhappily so prevalent, this magazine is as healthy in tone as it is attractive in externals.

Facts and Scraps.

AUSTRALIAN MEAT.—At the present starvation prices of butcher-meat and other necessary articles, we watch with great interest and pleasure the growing use of Australian meat. In the winter season especially, disease would be more easily averted, and, when it happens, would be more readily cured, by a freer use of animal food among the working classes. The steady influx of sound Australian meat really promises to make this practicable. A very striking testimony is borne to its value in a recent report of the surgeon to the County Gaol, Salford, Mr. C. H. Braddon. He reports that "the health of the prisoners had been well maintained during the quarter. Australian meat had been exclusively used for the prisoners during the last twelve months, and its use had been attended with the most satisfactory results. Not only had the physical strength of the patients during that time been quite as good as in former years, but there had been a marked decrease in the number of prisoners treated for disorders of the digestive organs, thus proving that these meats were not only wholesome and nutritious, but were more readily digested and assimilated than the 'rough cuts' of English meat usually supplied to prisons and workhouses."

EDUCATION IN AMERICA.—A census return has been issued, showing that the whole number of schools in 1870 in the United States of all kinds was 141,629, the number of teachers 221,042, of whom 93,329 were male and 127,713 female. The total number of pupils was 7,209,938—3,621,996 being male and 3,587,942 female. The total income from all sources of all the schools was 95,402,726 dols.; of this 3,663,785 dols. came from endowments, 61,746,039 dols. from taxation, and 29,992,902 dols. from all other sources, including tuition. The total income reported is nearly three times that for 1860, and nearly six times that for 1850. It is considered quite impossible that there should have been any such increase, and the apparent increase is, without doubt, referable to a failure in former censuses to secure complete returns. Of the total number of schools returned, the public schools are 125,059; classical, professional, and technical, 2,545; and others, 14,025. The total number of teachers in public schools is 183,198, and in the classical, professional, and technical, 12,767. The number of pupils in this latter class is 245,190, and in the public schools 6,228,060.

METROPOLITAN POOR.—Hitherto (says the *Pall Mall Gazette*) the metropolitan unions have apparently administered their relief each according to its independent notion of local requirements. A Parliamentary return of last Session recounts the cost per head for the indoor poor of the London workhouses. The legitimate object of a workhouse is the maintenance of its inmates in health,

and approximately in such comfort as falls to the lot of the poor. This can certainly be accomplished at the same cost whether the pauper be lodged in a West-end or East-end workhouse, in a North London or a South London workhouse. But what are the facts of the case? The difference of cost between the least and the most expensive union is enormous. The cheapest union is Bermondsey; the average weekly cost per indoor pauper during 1869 was 3s. 6¾d., or barely over 6d. per day; the dearest was Kensington, 6s. 1¼d., or 10½d. per day. It cost the Kensington guardians 70 per cent. more than the Bermondsey guardians to administer the same kind of relief. Shoreditch expends 5s. 3d. on its indoor pauper, while its neighbour, Whitechapel, manages to maintain him for 3s. 8½d. At Rotherhithe he costs 5s. 4½d., while the charge upon the contiguous parish of Bermondsey is only 3s. 6¾d. Islington takes rank among the richer unions of London, but it maintains its indoor poor at a much less cost than either Rotherhithe or Shoreditch, both of which belong to the poor districts.

CRIMINAL STATISTICS.—In the year 1870 the number of known thieves, depredators, and suspected persons at large was 52,987, but in 1871 there was a decrease of 2,843 in the number of this class, the total being 50,144, of whom 6,788 were under the age of sixteen years. This class has been on the decrease now for several years, the numbers having been 54,249 in 1869. Out of the total number of 50,144 of this class only 20,627 came under the head of "known thieves and depredators;" and the remainder, 29,517, consists of receivers of stolen goods and suspected persons. In the metropolis, comprising a radius of fifteen miles round Charing Cross, the number of known thieves and suspected persons was 3,546, being 561 less than in 1870, and being in proportion to the population as 1 to 1,095. Since the year 1861 the decrease in the total number of thieves and suspected persons at large has amounted to 17,404. The total estimated number of the criminal classes is 81,215, being comprised as follows:—Thieves, &c., at large, 50,144; in local prisons, 16,971; in convict prisons, 9,732; and in reformatories, 4,368. In 1870 this number was 86,366; and in 1869, 87,027. Houses of bad character were 11,072 in 1871, and 13,081 in 1870. As compared with the year 1870 there is a considerable decrease in the indictable offences reported: in the earlier year they were 51,972; and in 1871, 45,149, showing a decrease of 6,823, and following a decrease in 1869 of 6,469. Persons apprehended in respect of indictable offences in 1871 numbered 28,919 or 52·9 per cent. of the number of offences committed. The proportion of this percentage varies considerably, having been 51·2 in 1870, 50 in 1869, 49·9 in 1868, 50·6 in 1867, and 58·2 in 1863. Of the 23,919 persons apprehended in 1871 for indictable offences, we find that 5,446 were discharged for want of evidence, and 1,671 for want of prosecution.

Notices of Meetings.

OLD WOOLWICH ROAD.

THE twenty-fifth annual meeting of the friends of the above school was held in the Alexandra Hall, Blackheath, on January 21.

The chair was occupied by Sir Charles H. Mills, Bart., M.P. for West Kent, who congratulated the committee on the success which has rewarded their assiduous and self-denying labours, and

encouraged them by telling that many of the children who had been rescued from crime and degradation through the efforts of this and similar schools, have, in the colonies, become prosperous citizens and good useful men. But, he reminded them, there is yet much to be done, and exhorted to diligence in the good work they have undertaken. The Chairman dwelt upon the importance of maintaining religious education, and whilst the Education Act is to be turned to the best account, it must never be permitted to interfere with the voluntary efforts for the elevation and instruction of the ignorant, which Christianity teaches us to make. Sir Charles made a feeling reference to the Earl of Shaftesbury, now stricken with a double domestic sorrow in the death of a much loved wife and daughter. This allusion to the good Earl, whose interest in the cause of Ragged Schools is conspicuous amongst his many works of love, drew from the audience a hearty response of sympathy.

The report of the operations of the schools was most satisfactory. The buildings are such as the London School Board can accept as "efficient." The attendance of the children averages 260 per day. No fewer than 4,837 of these little waifs have had, since they were established, the advantage of the training and instruction this school imparts.

FARNINGHAM.

A NEW schoolhouse, built for the Home for Little Boys at the expense of some of the inhabitants of Bradford, was recently formally opened by the Mayor of that town, in presence of a number of friends and subscribers to the charity.

After a brief religious service in the new rooms, which are built with all modern requirements, the Mayor of Bradford, in the name of his fellow-townspeople, presented the building to the committee of the Home, and briefly explained the circumstances and motives which had led to its foundation. Mr. Robert Hanbury returned the most cordial thanks for the gift, which he said had come most opportunely to supply a want long felt, namely, that of educating the boys in two separate buildings. An illuminated address was then read aloud, and handed by the head boy to the chairman, who kindly congratulated him upon his performance. The old school-room is henceforth to be used as a chapel. In the course of the afternoon Mr. S. Morley, M.P., strongly advocated the principle of voluntary subscription, in opposition to Government aid. Though Government grants were undoubtedly most acceptable, he would far rather hear that the institution was supported entirely by voluntary contributions.

LEWISHAM.

ON Sunday evening, January 19th ult., Mr. J. W. Norton, City Missionary for the district, part of which is in Lee and part in Lewisham, opened a new Mission Room in Granville Mews by holding a religious service there. There was a good sprinkling of poor people present.

A cheering feature in connection with the Mission Room is that it is situated in the heart of a neighbourhood much needing such an institution. For some Sundays past, and on one or two week evenings, philanthropic ladies and gentlemen of Lee and Lewisham have conducted a Ragged School, which bids fair to become most useful. Already about forty lads of the roughest type, and whose education has been much neglected, are attracted to the school on every night it is open. It is intended shortly to open a "British Workman" on the same premises, in connection with which will be a reading-room, smoking-room, library, &c.

Papers, Original and Selected.

RELIGIOUS, SECULAR, AND SOCIAL EFFORTS OF THE LONDON RAGGED SCHOOLS.

A FRENCH cynic once said that there "was nothing so untrue as history—except statistics." It is true that in the hands of an unconscientious man figures may be so manipulated as to assert the very reverse of the truth. But when properly marshalled—not with any foregone conclusion, but simply with a view to deduce principles—they are most invaluable. In fact, nearly every recent social reform has been based on figures; for they told their tale better than any argument, and many were thereby convinced of the need of change who otherwise would have strenuously opposed any alteration in the existing laws.

It was indeed on figures alone that the Elementary Education Act of 1870 was based. It is true that hundreds of thousands were found in schools, but the census showed that so many of school-age in all parts of England were outside, that Parliament considered it desirable to do something for the training of these "outsiders," who were growing up fearless of God or man. It was estimated, for example, that large as was the school population of London, there were still about 100,000 children, from five to thirteen years of age, who did not attend any day or night school. It is these outsiders that the London School Board, with its compulsory powers, and the public purse at command, are bound to bring under elementary training. And should it fail in reaching these, however elaborate the machinery employed, and however skilful its teachers as educationists, it will have signally failed in performing the functions for which the Board was called into existence.

Still, whatever the School Board may or may not do, there is doubtless a large margin of work left for the Ragged School Union, to which no existing body is equal. This will be seen by the following statistics of the combined work of the affiliated institutions. We use the word "institutions" advisably; for, whilst Ragged Schools are *Schools*, they are also something more;

and were school work entirely eliminated from the system there would remain a residue of social and missionary operations of a most remarkable character.

This fact will be necessarily inferred from the following statistics. In our February number (see *ante*, p. 27) we supplied a list of our social and religious operations—the large aggregate of which we know startled many of our warmest supporters. But these statistics were incomplete, seeing that our secular work was omitted. This is of no slight importance, even after deducting those Day Schools which have been transferred to the School Board. The numbers still attending our secular schools—in the aggregate amounting to 17,896—more than justify the Committee of the Ragged School Union, who, in their Report made in May last, stated that "a long time must elapse before the Education Act can come into full operation throughout the metropolis, and even then, in the opinion of the Committee, there will still remain a large floating juvenile population of the poorest and most neglected class below the influence of ordinary schools, but which, as past experience has shown, can be best reached by such missionary agency as Ragged Schools. To bring this class of children under direct Christian teaching was the original aim of the Ragged School movement, and it has yet to be seen whether the rate-aided schools now being established will to any great extent comprehend them."

We now give a full summary, carefully prepared, of all our operations—religious, secular, and social—so that a complete view is supplied of the work under the supervision of the Ragged School Union:—

I.—RELIGIOUS.

143 Institutions have Sunday Schools, viz.—
57 in the Morning, with 3,426 Scholars present.
58 in the Afternoon, with 12,817 Scholars present.
85 in the Evening, with 14,430 Scholars present.

Children's Services—
39, with 2,770 in attendance.

Senior Bible Classes—
76, with 1,452 in attendance.

Ragged Churches—
67, with 5,596 in attendance.

Prayer Meetings—
115, with 1,435 Teachers and 1,812 Scholars in attendance.

Libraries—
71, with 17,481 volumes.
Six Institutions are without any Sunday effort.

II.—SECULAR.

82 Institutions have Day Ragged Schools, viz.—
84 mixed and Infants', with 9,851 Scholars.
16 Boys', with 1,326 Scholars.
14 Girls', with 1,024 Scholars.
145 Teachers, 378 Monitors.
83 Institutions have Night Schools, viz.—
26 mixed, with 1,925 Scholars.
52 Boys', with 2,250 Scholars.
56 Girls', with 1,520 Scholars.
94 Paid Teachers, 292 Voluntary Teachers.
Industrial Classes—
72 Boys' and Girls', with 2,940 Scholars.

III.—SOCIAL.

83 Penny Banks, for Scholars—
Depositors, 19,762.
Deposited, £6,909 13s. 3d.
7 Penny Banks, for Costermongers, &c.—
Depositors, 9,672.
Deposited, £4,476.
42 Clothing Clubs—
Members, 3,710.
Subscribed, £743 10s. 6d.
6 Boot Clubs—
Members, 256.
Subscribed, £84 8s. 3d.
3 Coal Clubs—
Members, 95.
Subscribed, £25 10s.
36 Bands of Hope—
3,685 Members attend.
13 Song Services, or Singing Classes—
577 attend.
68 Mothers' Meetings—
2,564 attend.
6 Labourers' Clubs.

3 Infant Nurseries—
78 weekly average.
35 provide Children's Dinners for 7,195 Boys and Girls.
5 Flower Shows.
8 Open-air Services.
10 Tract Distributions.
5 Series of Lectures.
4 Societies for Lending—Money, Clothes, Blankets, Baby Linen, &c.

We leave these statistics of our work for the consideration of our readers, for we think that they tell their tale too well to require much comment. One question, however, presents itself—it is this: Where would London be ten years hence, if these social and evangelistic operations were suddenly to collapse? Would it not speedily—with its three millions and a half, myriads of whom live from hand to mouth—become a scene of rapine, lawlessness, and rampant crime, the horrors of which no pen save that of a Defoe could adequately depict? It would be in vain then to call for the re-establishment of Ragged Schools; for the present workers would have been dispersed, and there would be none to replace them. It is thus seen that the extinction of Ragged Schools would not be merely a mistake, but a great social sin—to be tracked before long, like all national crimes, by a terrible Nemesis!

FUND FOR AGED AND DESERVING WORKERS.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

SIR,—It is usual to defer raising "memorials" to our public benefactors till they are beyond reach of either man's praise or blame. May I venture to suggest a departure from this custom in the case of your revered President? He is not one to desire "storied urn or monumental bust," but now that his venerable head is bowed down with the weight of a double bereavement, might it not be soothing to his feelings if a "Shaftesbury Sympathy Fund" were inaugurated for an object which must be dear to a heart like his, a fund to afford help to faithful Ragged School teachers on their retirement, whether from ill health or other circumstance?

Noble workers who have for many years been bearing the burden and heat of the day, must feel their faith sorely tried on contemplating the prospect (in some cases not remote) of an old age of hardship, if not of

actual destitution. I believe that such a "Shaftesbury Sympathy Fund" for such an object would draw out some of the noblest feelings in the breasts of ragged scholars, and those who once bore that name. Halfpenny collecting cards, entrusted to elder pupils, would probably be filled up with delight, and such a result would be a peculiarly valuable testimony to the utility of Ragged Schools in a moral point of view.

Should such a fund be started, pray let a donation of £10 be placed on the list from me as "A tribute to the Earl of Shaftesbury."

A. L. O. E.

[We feel much indebted to our valued correspondent for her kind suggestion. We shall be glad to hear the opinion of our readers on this important subject.

Some of the paid Ragged School teachers are between sixty and seventy years of age, with comparatively little diminution of energy. Many have been zealous workers in Ragged Schools above a quarter of a century. As their salaries were too small to permit them to make any provision for old age, we should be glad if, in response to "A. L. O. E's." appeal, a fund was raised to assist such earnest workers for Christ. We need scarcely say that any sums entrusted to the Committee of the Union for that purpose would be dispensed amongst the most aged and deserving.—Ed.]

NIGHT-BELL OF PRAYER.

BY REV. THEODORE CUYLER, D.D.

"Pull the night-bell." This is the inscription we often see written on the doorpost of the shop in which medicines are sold. Some of us have had our experiences with night-bells when sudden illness has overtaken some member of our households, or when the sick have rapidly grown worse. How have we hurried through the silent streets, when only here and there a light glimmered from some chamber window! How eagerly have we pulled the night-bell at our physician's door; and then, with prescription in hand, have sounded the alarm at the place where the remedy was to be procured. Those of us who have had these lonely midnight walks, and have given the summons for quick relief, know the meaning of that Bible-text, "Arise! cry out in the night!"

There are different kinds of prayer. There is the calm communion of the soul with God. There is the affectionate converse of the believer with him, in which faith feeds on the promises, and recounts its mercies, and finds its meditations to be sweet. Then, too, there is the sharp, piercing cry of anguish, or the earnest appeal of importunity, which will not let God go without an immediate response. Christ described the beseeching eagerness of this style of prayer, when he told his disciples about a certain housekeeper who went to a friend's house at midnight, and clamoured for the loan of three loaves of bread to feed unexpected guests, until, "because of his importunity," he got all the bread that he needed. There are many

varieties of night-calls for relief, from the sudden cry of our little ones in their cribs, to the shout for "Help!" in the street, or the eager call under the physician's window. These are all types of the prayer which you are to pour out into the ear of God in seasons of difficulty, or distress, or danger.

"This is all a very pretty theory," some of you may say; "and it has a very pious sound. But please to tell me what actual and positive good it can do me. Does it really move God? Does it really bring relief?" Such cavils are as common as breathing. The devil can suggest them in a hundred forms; and it is astonishing how much readier some people are to believe the father of lies, than to believe their Father in heaven.

Does the prayer of faith really move God? To this we can only reply, that God himself tells us that it does actually produce that state of things in which it is right and in accordance with his will to bestow the asked-for blessing. God tells us that he loves to be asked, and is the rewarder of them who diligently seek him. He tells us that the fervent effectual prayer of the righteous availeth much. He bids us ask, and we shall receive. His word abounds in narratives of the actual bestowal of things which his children have besought him to give them. When his needy or suffering ones have pulled the night-bell of prayer with strong faith, he has relieved them of their distress, or removed evils they suffered from, or else given to them supernatural grace to bear their burdens. On his bed of anguish Hezekiah rang this night-bell, and God heard it, and spared his life. In his dungeon at Jerusalem Peter cried unto the Lord, and a whole prayer-meeting cried at the same time for his deliverance, and God sent his angel and brought the apostle out of the prison. Answered prayers cover the field of providential history as flowers cover Western prairies. Answered prayers hover around the communion-tables of our churches in seasons of revival, as we have seen great flocks of birds descend into a meadow. Answered prayers have made the pulpits of Payson, and Burns, and Spurgeon, powerful. Answered prayers have visited sick-rooms like angels, to restore to life; or, if infinite wisdom had appointed to the sick to die, the sting of death has been turned to the song of victory. "I cannot get on without three hours a day of prayer now," said Martin Luther in the thick of his great fight with the man of sin. Are you wiser than Luther?

Some people pull the bell of prayer, and then run away without stopping for the answer. Sometimes they grow discouraged, and mistake a delay for a total denial. Sometimes the thing asked for is not actually bestowed, but in lieu of it our all-wise Father grants us something far better. He does not spare our sick darling's life, but he takes the little one home to heaven, and draws our poor hearts up with it unto himself. God answers prayers according to his own wisdom and love, and not according to our own short-sightedness. But I no more believe that God leaves a right prayer, offered in the right spirit, to pass unnoticed, than I believe that he will let the whole summer pass over without a drop of rain or dew.

In securing answers to our requests, we must co-operate with the Lord. Some people ask him to do their work. "Father," said a little boy, after

he had heard him pray fervently for the poor at family worship—"father, I wish I had your corn-crib." "Why, my son?" "Because then I would answer your prayer." I have heard professing Christians pray for the conversion of their children, while they were taking them night after night into scenes of folly and dissipation. We may make fools of ourselves, but the Almighty will never let us implicate him in our foolishness. God is not mocked; whatsoever we sow, we shall also reap. Neither does God ever mock us.

Then, my friend, if you will only "arise and cry in the night," you may be sure that your Father will hear the bell. He will send the right answer; and if it is not best that he lift off your load, he will give you grace to carry it. Pull the bell with a strong hand! You'll never doubt that God is a prayer-answerer when you get to heaven. There is no night there! He who has often arisen in the night of trouble and sorrow here to ring the bell of prayer, with a trembling hand, will then stand in the morning light of glory on the sea of glass like unto pure gold.

NEW YORK CORPORATE OR RAGGED SCHOOLS.

It is somewhat remarkable how the need of Ragged Schools has always pressed upon the notice of all who knew anything of the wants and woes of the juvenile poor. It was this fact which caused Cranfield and his helpers to establish the famous "Fragment Schools" of Southwark. Thus, too, a familiar knowledge of the terrible temptations to which the children of poverty were exposed, led Miss Howell thirty years ago to open "Schools for the Destitute" in Westminster.

It is true that in both cases the name "*Ragged*" School was not adopted; yet still, under different appellations, the same classes were regarded—namely, those who from habits or dress were not fit for ordinary schools.

Nor is this class—the very seed-plot of crime—confined to London; but every foreign capital has the very same elements. Hence it is that Ragged Schools have been established in Paris, Amsterdam, and Madrid with signal success. Even New York, though it has a well-worked system of general education, has found it necessary to establish special schools for its juvenile wild tribes. In a land of equality, the name "Ragged" was scarcely likely to be adopted, and hence these schools are known by the somewhat indefinite name of "Corporate Schools."

The *Leisure Hour* contains the following account of these Ragged Schools:—"There are in New York two distinct sets of schools—the one called 'the common schools,' the other known as 'the corporate schools.' The former, supported by rates, are what is called the common school system of America. These schools every child of the city has free admission to.

Yet with this free provision there is a very large proportion of the children of New York which the rate-supported education does not reach;

The poorest or ragged class cannot be induced to attend these schools, though free, as, among other things, they suffer from the petty persecutions of the children who are better clad than themselves.

In consequence of this condition the other set of schools—the corporate schools—sprang into existence some years ago from voluntary religious efforts to supply that portion of the population which was thus left uneducated. These are the 'American Ragged Schools,' supported by voluntary subscriptions, and managed by voluntary managers; their funds are supplemented to the extent of about a third from the city funds. In the year 1869 there were 6,900 children in average attendance, and 18,752 on the books of these schools. In 1870 there were about 7,000 in average attendance, and over 19,000 on the books.

The schools of these societies are in the poorest districts of the city, in the very localities where the children are to be found. These schools form thus a supplementary system, supplying education to a class which the common schools had failed to reach."

Many of these "corporate schools" are planted in the notorious "Five Points." This locality, flooded as it is by Irish immigrants, is quite a reproduction of Seven Dials, with all that vice, squalor, and misery which none but a Dickens could adequately depict. Happily, the success of these semi-mission schools has been so signal that the warmest advocates of State-education readily supply the funds needful to carry on their varied operations. Need we say, then, that we wish "God-speed" to the New York Corporate Schools, seeing that they are but Ragged Schools under another name.

A VISIT TO A BOYS' THEATRE.

FEW people have the slightest conception of what Christian workers have to contend against in the low neighbourhoods of the great metropolis of London, especially at the East-end, where sin and vice of every description abound.

I feel it will be no easy task for me to describe one of the greatest evils we have to battle against, viz., the Low Theatre. It is no uncommon thing for our meetings to be disturbed by one or two boys exhibiting their theatrical attainments, which have been gained by their frequenting these low theatres and gaffs; and the object of this article is to give an insight to one of these places. Would that I could adequately describe the sights that I witnessed some few Saturdays since, when, with a friend, I visited several of these haunts.

We started from home a little after eight o'clock on a wet night. Few people were out of doors, and one would have imagined that few, either old or young, would have felt inclined to go out, especially to the place we were bound for. But this made no difference to those who frequented these places. On arriving at the theatre, which was situated in a street having little traffic through it, we walked to the ticket box, and were greeted by a gruff voice, "Where for?"

I replied, "Private boxes for two," for which the sum of one shilling was demanded, and two dirty pieces of coloured cardboard were given in exchange. A bolt was then drawn (the noise of which, if we had been at all nervous, might have alarmed us in such a place), and we were allowed to pass through a private door. The box-keeper then called out at the top of his voice, "Two gents, private." I must say that we looked like anything but "gents," as we could not attend such a place in ordinary attire without being recognised by some of the boys. We were ushered to our box by a gentleman in livery certainly not his own.

To describe adequately what then met our eyes would be simply impossible. The stage boards were filthy in the extreme; the scenery (if I can give it that name) was of the most ordinary painting, and all torn. The accommodation consisted of six private boxes, pit, and three galleries, for which 1d., 2d., and 6d. were charged respectively. The building was crammed, and a whole sea of boys' faces met our eyes as we drew back the ragged remains of a curtain. The noise was so great that the actors' voices could only be heard a very little way from the stage; we were close upon the latter, and we could hardly hear. Nor will the reader be surprised at this, when I say that with few exceptions, the whole house (about 1,200) was in a perfect uproar; they cursed and swore to an extent that was perfectly horrifying; from the pit to the top gallery it was one continued stream of blasphemy. I marvelled that the actors continued through such a storm of foul language, but it seemed to have no effect upon them; they went through their parts just as well, for aught I know, as they would have done had there been perfect silence. The acting was of the poorest possible type, and of the most vulgar character.

Beer, &c., was sold, and I am sorry to say, many boys spend their week's earnings at these places. I have been told by several, that they have even pawned their best clothes to spend the money in these revelries. I can easily imagine some reader exclaiming, Can this be true? does the law allow such places to exist? can men be found so bad as, night after night, to draw the pence from the pockets of these poor lads, in exchange for what, if known to the world at large, would not be tolerated for a moment? It seems incredible! but such it is, and far worse. I dare not commit to paper all I saw and heard; and this is what we have to battle against.

Think for one moment what inducements we have to hold out to draw boys away from these places. We want something that will take with these lads, whose minds are nightly poisoned with such trashy, and often positively immoral, exhibitions. But, thank God, we are doing something to counteract this gigantic evil, for many boys who once frequented the place I have tried to describe, are no longer to be found there, but in our mission. "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name be all the glory."

EDWIN H. KERWIN.

Stepney Youth's Mission, 23, *Stepney Green*.

In Memoriam.

REV. THOMAS GUTHRIE, D.D.

DEATH has been very busy in our midst of late. In addition to the four deaths reported in our January and February numbers, we have to record the decease of the Hon. and Rev. Baptist Noel, who had for many years been one of the visiting committee of the Union. And also of Mr. Henry Ansell, who was for many years the energetic superintendent of Hoxton Ragged School. Whatever their rank, all did their Master's work well, and doubtless as the crown of their life-work have heard his "Well done, good and faithful servants."

But chief amongst those who have been thus recently called home to their eternal rest is Dr. Guthrie, who died on February 24th, in his 70th year. From the time that the picture of John Pounds, the Portsmouth cobbler, showed him what Christian kindness even in humblest life can do to socialise and save the wild tribes of our great cities, Dr. Guthrie became a steady supporter of Ragged Schools—the original Ragged School in Edinburgh being his chief sphere of action. When he issued his famous "Plea for Ragged Schools," that institution was almost in a state of collapse, but his vivid description of the sins and sorrows of our juvenile waifs and strays touched the chord of sympathy in the public heart, and about £3,000 was poured into its treasury, and hence this Ragged School still continues to do a great and a good work both for God and man.

Though Dr. Guthrie's work as a Ragged School man was chiefly confined to Scotland, yet his heart was too large to care only for the work in which he was personally engaged. Many times has he in his "Sunday Magazine" reported the work and mentioned in favourable terms Ragged Schools south of the Tweed. Almost his last public appearance was to conduct the Gray's Yard Ragged Church one Sunday morning, and afterwards to give a graphic sketch in the "Sunday Magazine" of June last of the strange congregation he then addressed. Well might he say, as he surveyed the strange groups gathered from slum and den and casual ward for public worship in that Ragged School:—

"As a licentiate and ordained minister, we have been preaching now, in God's good providence, for forty-seven years, but never to such a congregation of sin and misery as we met that Sabbath-day, in the upper room of a house in a court that opened by a narrow lane into a mean street. Not long before we had preached in a spacious pavilion, that, with banners pendent from the roof, and its draped walls festooned with wreaths of flowers, stood on a beautiful lawn, by the shores of a Highland loch, and under the shadow of the everlasting hills. There was a

greater difference between the audiences than the scenes; and one sad to see, where all were of one blood and had souls equally precious. What a gulf between that assembly of royal and noble rank—men who held the highest offices of the State and its fortunes in their hands, women the ornaments of society, and those of humble rank, whether in trews or belted plaid, with health blooming in their honest faces and vigour reposing in every muscle of their manly forms—what a gulf between those and these five hundred tramps, beggars, thieves, and ruffians, hoary and youthful vice, ragged forms, crushed and wretched and hopeless-looking beings, homeless and houseless wanderers, many of whom looked as if their hearts had never beat with hope, nor their countenances been lighted by a smile! We never saw such a congregation, nor rose to speak under such depression. There was no hope for us but in God. Our hearers looked as if even all humanity had been washed out of them—as a home-missionary in London, a Scotchman, who had probably been originally a carpenter, said, 'It's awfu' wark, awfu' wark, the wood is so rotten it winna haud a nail!'"

The following outline of Dr. Guthrie's life and work we have abridged from the *Daily News*. It was more marked for long-continued hard work than by any striking incidents:—

"Born at Brechin, in Forfarshire, in 1803, the son of a merchant and banker there, he was educated in the University of Edinburgh, and was then licensed to preach by the Presbytery of Brechin. Before entering fully on his ministerial career he went to Paris, where he acquired a general knowledge of medicine, with the view of giving medical advice and help to the sick poor with whom his pastoral duties would bring him into contact. On his return from Paris he went into his father's banking-house; and it was not till the year 1830 that he entered on what was to be the vocation of his life. In that year he was ordained Minister of Arbilot, near Arbroath, in his native county of Forfar. Dr. Guthrie was translated to the Church of the Greyfriars in Edinburgh, where his preaching soon gave him considerable celebrity. He had not been long in Edinburgh when the Church of St. John was erected especially for him, and he was transferred to it in 1840. St. John's soon became the most popular church in Edinburgh. Strangers from a distance might be more attracted by the names of men of greater fame, but the minister of St. John's was the favourite of Auld Reekie herself. Dr. Guthrie took up with characteristic zeal and energy the movement begun by John Pounds, the cobbler philanthropist of Portsmouth, for gathering in, teaching, and humanising the wretched Arabs of the streets. The result of his fervent appeals was the founding of the original Ragged Schools of Edinburgh. In the four sermons he published under the title of 'The City; its Sins and Sorrows,' there are some singularly graphic descriptions of Edinburgh as seen from the heights hard by the city; and again, of the same ancient capital on a nearer view, where her sins and sorrows hide themselves. He was fond of telling his personal experiences in that mission to the outcast children of the streets which he had almost made his own. He was as welcome to the school as to the church, and was as much admired and reverenced by the little Arabs he

had saved as by his congregation. If he took a friend with him to see the school, it was impossible not to be struck with the joyous glances with which the children looked up to him, and the readiness with which they answered his questions. He had words of encouragement for one, of sympathy with another, of cheerful recognition for them all. 'Well done, my lad; you will make your way in the world, sir,' he would say in answer to the quick reply of a poor boy whose way even to a decent living seemed to be a long one. He was fond of telling a story of his early experiences in the effort to get together the ragged children and teach them. On one occasion the teacher knelt down to pray at the conclusion of the school, and Dr. Guthrie knelt with him. They both closed their eyes during the prayer, which, in Scottish fashion, was probably rather long. Dr. Guthrie, however, opened his eyes while the schoolmaster still continued to pray, and saw before him a crowd of grinning faces red with the effort to suppress their laughter, as two ragged urchins stood, each holding a candle, right under the nose of the unconscious schoolmaster."

Personally popular as was Dr. Guthrie—for if he was at home with dukes, he was no less a favourite with costermongers—we are not surprised that his funeral was of a semi-public character. Previous to the funeral, services were held in Newington Free and Grange United Presbyterian Churches. The body, enclosed in two coffins, the outer one of polished oak, was placed in an open catafalque drawn by four horses. The procession was arranged in the following order:—Boys and school of original Ragged School; boys of Industrial Brigade; Kirk Session and Deacons' Court of Free St. John's; Edinburgh and Leith United Presbyterian Presbytery; Edinburgh Free Presbytery; Principal Professors and Students of Free Church College; Lord Provost Cowan; Magistrates and Council of Edinburgh, in official robes, and preceded by halberdiers; two High Constables of Edinburgh; the body, with pall-bearers, followed by numerous private carriages. The procession, about one mile in length, was witnessed by about 15,000 people. A wreath was laid on the coffin by a Ragged School boy, and his favourite hymn, "There is a happy land, far, far away," was sung by children at the conclusion of the service at the grave.

We need add no more to this sketch of the life-work of Dr. Guthrie, and the other good men and true, who did so much to make Ragged Schools a success. But they all bequeath to us who remain the lesson, never more needed than in these days of advancing rationalism and popery—"What thy hand findeth to do—DO IT!" For to-morrow may be a day too late.

LONDON ARABIA.

IT is of Arabia and of City Arabs we would say a few tender and sad words. We might jest on them; but we have no heart to play with infant wretchedness and childish endurance. Do our country readers—perhaps our London ones—ask where is this English Arabia—where are these City

Arabs? The land is hard to find as a whole, for it is everywhere scattered in squalid strips and grimy patches, which few but its own inhabitants penetrate, or know the reeking miseries of. The country is up innumerable lanes and countless alleys—where light is almost a forbidden luxury, where water even is a treasure too precious to be wasted on cleanliness—and where small lives know shelter from the shadows of night in thronged and feverish, and hideously unclean dens of abodes, such as the Bedouin would object to make a home of.

In these haunts of destitution, of famine, of fever, and of all moral degradation—our Arabs home, when they quit daylight and the open air. Yet other districts, even yet more wretched, Arabia claims as its own. Over those abodes of night might well be written: "All hope abandon ye who enter here." The frightfulness of the scenes and sufferings those gaping vaults of gloom cover, makes them the foulest districts of the land we are describing. Let us get into the blessed light of day from the terrible thoughts of these haunts of some of our Arabs.

We have described the land where they dwell; let us look at the race that dwells within it. In doing so, we call up before us the opprobrium of our crowded streets and of our Christian civilisation. We look upon uncared-for little ones, ranging up through all the ages of childhood. They are of both sexes—boys and girls—largely unowned, and parentless—if the want of all knowledge of parents, of all dependence on the care and guidance of fathers, of all the tenderness and enduring affection of mothers, can make them so. Perhaps they have, nominally, those that should be parents to them. If so, is there reverence from the children, or anything but brutality, or at best but neglect, from such parents? Of the blessed meanings which others find in the one word—home—of homes with protection and holy care—with sufficiency of meals and enduring guardianship—what do these poor waifs and strays of neglected humanity know?

Come here, young barefeet! Let us learn what life is to you. Its gifts are rags. Those childish feet bless summer, and abhor winter; for their eternal shoelessness makes the former inexpressibly grateful, as a release from the frozen wretchedness of the other biting and pitiless season. Hatlessness is of small import. In that matted, uncombed roofing of hair, kindly Nature has protected that small head from the sun of summer, and the rain and snow of the year's less clement months. But, if that little brain-box be cared for outside, how is it within? Ah! here man should busy himself with the due furnishing which comes not without human care. What knowledge has the little mind? What culture has the childish soul received? Must we say, None? Yes. What is this universe he has been born into to him? Of all he sees, of all these things, he knows nothing. Of all, he has no care to know anything. Nature and all its varied scenes—art, and all its thousand treasures—literature, and all its thoughts, feelings, and priceless fancies—these are worlds that are sure ever to be blank to him. What is his religion? Ah, what? He lives among Christians. Does he know the merest first facts of Christ's faith, or has he a glimpse of what morality is? Does he know the very name of God or of Devil, of good or of evil? What is his idea of vice, sin, crime? Of the

two former, and what they teach, he is in contented and unconscious ignorance. They trouble not him. What nature impels him to do, he does. Whatever passion stirs him, he unhesitatingly obeys its impulse. As to "crime," as Comus says, "'tis only daylight that makes sin." In itself, to him, crime is only to be avoided as bringing down upon him the strong hand of the policeman, and the awful verdict of "the beak." If these be escaped, the gains of pilfering are rightful acquisitions, to be enjoyed and gloried over with his fellows, even as the actual Bedouin of the desert takes with the strong hand, and feels not shame, but honour in the deed.

Of late, Christian souls have had regard to his woeful social, mental, moral and religious state. Ragged Schools have risen for his comfort and his training, and shoe-blacking and newspaper selling have opened professions to him. Soon may these curiosities of our time and country live alone in the books of our day.—*British Workwoman.*

W. C. BENNETT.

GIDEON'S THREE HUNDRED.

As Gideon's army were about to attack the hosts of Midian, God gave a singular test whereby the leader might know the right men for the battle. In their advance the army had to cross a brook, and Gideon was told that "every one that lappeth of the water, as a dog lappeth with his tongue, thou shalt set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink. And the number of men that lapped putting their hand to their mouth, was three hundred men." These men pressed right on through the water, taking what they could while still advancing, while the rest halted, and threw themselves down upon the bank leisurely to drink their fill.

Between these two bodies there was quite a difference. They were all valiant, but they were not all enduring, self-sacrificing men. These recumbent drinkers were not afraid of Midian, but they were afraid of fatigue, and heat, and thirst; they had not forgotten self, but mingled with their patriotism a strong regard to personal comfort, so they lay down to refresh themselves and drink at their leisure. But the three hundred, forgetting self, with eye, and thought, and soul absorbed with the one object before them, pressed forward with singleness of purpose, as unmindful of pain, or thirst, or weariness, as they were of the myriads of Midian—and these were the true men of God.

So now, when you hear men tell of giving when it is convenient—doing when it is convenient—you may rest assured they are the men that lie down to drink, and God will work no deliverance by them.

When you see a Christian at the Ragged School in fair weather—at the prayer-meeting if the moon shines—if he has no company—and he is not too tired—and never otherwise—you may set him down as *not* one of Gideon's three hundred.

When you find a disciple in church, or at conference meetings, when nothing is required of him to say or do—no contributions to be taken—and

no efficient measure to be adopted for Christ, you may conclude he is *not* one of those that lap.

But when you find one, like the widow in the temple, giving all to God, even "all her living"—a devoted father like Abram, laying his son upon the altar—an agonising pastor like Knox, crying out, "Lord, give me Scotland, or I die"—a faithful teacher resolutely throwing himself between his class and the second death—you may be sure that you have found some of Gideon's three hundred.

When we see the sin and misery by which we are surrounded, we are too apt to think that our numbers are too small for the conflict. But ought we not rather to feel that what we really need is not so much a larger number of preachers and teachers, but rather those of the right stamp—men, in fact, akin in spirit to Gideon's illustrious three hundred? Given even three such men as Knox, Luther, and Calvin, and how soon the moral aspect of London would change. We may well, then, pray—the Lord send us another man like the apostle Paul!

Poet's Corner.

A TRANSFORMATION.

I THOUGHT them only worthless weeds,
So poor and frail they seemed to be,
And doubted if such trivial work
The Master had designed for me.

Then came His word: "Though but a weed
The Gardener giveth thee to tend,
Be faithful to the sacred trust—
Thy blind eyes cannot see the end.

What seemeth but a graceless weed
The germ of fairest bloom may hold,
As what the miser deemeth dross
May prove, at last, the purest gold."

Rebuked, I sought my garden bed,
Resolved no toil or pains to spare;
A lowly weed, beloved of Him,
Was worthy of my highest care;

And weeping turned with tender hand
The feeble petals to the light,
When lo, beneath my sorrowing tears,
The weeds were changed to lilies white.

Teachers' Column.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES.

Part I.

On February 28th an aggregate meeting of the teachers of Morton Road and Nichol Street Ragged Schools was held at Union Chapel. Rev. H. Allon, D.D., presided. At this conference the following exhaustive paper on Children's Services was read by Mr. Bramhall:—

On the threshold of the discussion, we are confronted by the question of the advisability of holding Children's Services at all. As a general rule, it will be considered sufficient for children to attend one service in the day, and if that be held in the school, they will probably not go to any ordinary place of worship, a result which is regarded by some as in itself objectionable, as being likely to keep them from forming habits of attendance at church or chapel. From this view I entirely dissent. It is not easy to imagine a plan more likely to engender a dislike to the worship of the sanctuary, than the compulsory attendance of children at a long service which is intended for those whose capacity and experience far exceed their own, and which it is therefore very unlikely they will be able to appreciate. Let it rather be understood that the Children's Service is one intended for them, and let us try to make that attractive, and then we may with much more reason expect that as they grow older they will of themselves take pleasure in regular attendance at a place where they have no painful memories of having been obliged to sit perfectly still while a service was going on which they could not understand, and in which, therefore, they could not join. We must not forget, either, the discomfort too often caused to the congregation by the presence of noisy and restless children. Whether advisable or not, however, want of space and other circumstances often render separate services a necessity, and I therefore propose, assuming that they are to be held, to proceed at once to the question of how they are to be made at the same time attractive and profitable to all who attend them, teachers as well as children.

One most important point is that the service should not last too long. Its exact length will of course vary with the age and intelligence of the children, and will also be influenced by whether it is complete in itself, or immediately follows the ordinary school-teaching; but if it is so long as to become in any way wearisome, great danger is incurred that more harm than good will follow. But in addition to being brief, it is of the greatest importance that it should be bright, cheerful, and joyous. We ask the children to join us in worship, and if we make the service dull, lifeless, and dreary, we shall not only find that it is unsuccessful and unsatisfactory, but we shall do much to produce on their minds the impression that religion is a repulsive and melancholy thing, while if it is bright, happy, and pleasant, that alone will materially help to recommend our religion to our scholars. And further, it is necessary that there should be nothing that is in any respect beyond their comprehension.

If, then, we are careful to secure these three points, we may reasonably expect that our services will be satisfactory. If they are otherwise, do not let us blame the children, for we may be quite sure the fault is in ourselves. If children are thoroughly interested, they will very quickly resent any interruption, and any one attempting such will find that both teachers and scholars are against him, and he will soon give up a proceeding which places him in so unenviable a position. Let us, then, consider by what means we may attain the end we have in view.

The first and most important point of all is to get the right teachers to conduct the service. Many a good and useful teacher, a man who is doing right nobly in his own class, entirely lacks the qualifications necessary for this very different work. He may be a man whose heart is thoroughly in what he is doing, and who is successful and happy in his own class, and yet when he comes to this more public work he utterly fails. He is probably an intensely conscientious man; he will not shrink from taking his share in the duties of the school, and so, notwithstanding repeated discouragements, he struggles on for year after year, doing his utmost, striving, praying, distressed at his want of success, and notwithstanding all his good intentions, doing no little to prevent the success of the service. Or, on the other hand, one sometimes meets with men who, recognising and deploring the unsatisfactory state of things, are yet quite unconscious of what is patent to every one else, that they themselves are largely the cause of it.

Probably every superintendent will here recognise one of his greatest difficulties. And yet the remedy is near at hand if we could but summon up courage to use it. Why should we not point out to each other our respective deficiencies and shortcomings. Of all the blessings one can have, there are few of greater value than a friend on whom one can fully rely to say exactly what he thinks: one whose affection is beyond suspicion, who is too true a friend to flatter, and who will faithfully and yet kindly tell us the truth about ourselves. And yet how very rare it is to find such a one. Surely, if anywhere, there should be among Ragged School teachers such friendship as this. We meet and work together for a common purpose, and yet we allow that purpose to be frustrated and our work hindered through fear of giving offence. Oh, that we could rise above all such paltry feelings, and have such mutual trust and confidence that we dared speak to one another freely, each knowing that whatever is said is prompted only by a desire to further the cause for which all are working.

But there is yet another way of overcoming this difficulty which is open to us all. There is little conventional courtesy about the majority of children. They never hesitate to show whether they are interested or not. The perfect stillness, the intent gaze, the half-opened mouth, do not more surely show when they are attracted and pleased, than do the uneasy fidgeting, the incessant whispering, the playful tricks, manifest their utter weariness. If these latter signs are the rule, there is something radically wrong in the system under which the services are conducted, which must be corrected if any good is to be done; but if children who are usually orderly and attentive manifest such symptoms whenever a particular teacher is at the desk, he may be sure the fault lies in himself. In speaking thus, I would not be understood for a moment to urge any one hastily to jump at the conclusion that he is not qualified. A teacher on being pressed to assist in the services may reluctantly consent from mere motives of duty, and with no heart in what he is doing may try, more than half hoping that he will not succeed, in order that he may with a clear conscience retire from this particular branch of effort. Is it any wonder, then, that he is unsuccessful? Would it not rather be cause for surprise if he did succeed? But is his non-success any reason for his abandoning the work? Assuredly not. Rather would we say to him, Strive to put your whole heart into the work, examine yourself, find out all your weak points, and set yourself vigorously to correct them; leave no effort untried, wrestle with God in prayer for his blessing on your efforts; forget yourself; let your all-absorbing motive be to glorify God and do good to your fellows, and you will probably find at last that what you undertook reluctantly, and from a

sense of duty only, will become to you such a pleasure that nothing short of necessity would induce you to give it up.

What are then the qualifications that are requisite for success in this work? An apparently secondary matter, and yet one that is not without importance, is that the teacher should possess a lively manner and good clear voice. The most interesting narratives and the most heart-stirring appeals completely lose their effect if they are delivered in a cold, dull, and lifeless manner, or if there is a difficulty in understanding what is said. Then it is also important that he should have the power of exercising authority and commanding obedience, for however good and efficient the other teachers may be, it will chiefly depend upon the one at the desk whether the service is orderly or otherwise. To some this power seems to come instinctively, they never have any difficulty in keeping order, while to others it seems quite unattainable, and yet I think that the cases are rare indeed in which it really is so, and that it will eventually be possessed by him who perseveringly strives after it.

But important as are these two qualifications, there is another which I have already touched upon, and which is of more consequence than both of them put together. I refer to a warm and hearty interest in the work. No one will ever succeed who does not throw his whole soul into what he is about. That this is comparatively difficult, I freely admit. Many of the conditions which help to make class work a delight, the individual interest felt in each boy or girl, the constant personal contact, the warm affection which springs up between teacher and scholars, are to a large extent wanting in the more general work of the service. The individual gets lost in the crowd, and it is not easy to feel enthusiastic about a crowd. One way of overcoming this difficulty is to obtain a more intimate personal knowledge of the scholars than is usually the case. It is a great drawback on our school work that the school is broken up into a large number of groups, each of which has little or no knowledge of any teacher except its own, so that when a teacher takes charge of the whole school at the service, he might almost as well be an entire stranger, for all the knowledge he has of the greater number of the scholars or they of him. How much stronger would be his position if he were personally acquainted with those whom he has to manage, and they, on their part, knew, respected, and loved him! Children who will care little for any stranger may be easily controlled by a word or a look from one whom they well know and who has won their regard. This power is so well expressed by Mr. Thomas Hughes in his "Tom Brown's School-days," that I cannot refrain from quoting his words. He says: "Ah! light words of those whom we love and honour, what a power ye are, and how carelessly wielded by those who can use you. Surely for these things also God will ask an account." Admitting the desirability of this, how is it to be secured? It is clearly impossible to lay down any definite rules where circumstances differ so largely. I will therefore content myself with indicating a plan that I think would be found useful in our ordinary Sunday School. The majority of the classes there are taught by one teacher in the morning and another in the afternoon; and supposing that a morning teacher is about to be absent, it is frequently the custom for him to ask his colleague to supply his place. Would it not be better to ask the afternoon teacher of some other class to do this, as by such an arrangement teachers would occasionally have to take classes other than their own, and thus would, little by little, come to know many to whom they would otherwise remain entire strangers. It would, I am sure, be an advantage in many respects, if by this and such other methods as experience might suggest we could render

our schools a harmonious whole, instead of a mere collection of groups.

It will greatly tend to promote reverence and order in the service if there is a reverent demeanour on the part of all the teachers present, who should, when practicable, sit among the scholars, not stand sentry over them, still less walk about the room. We should endeavour to feel, not that it is our duty to preserve order while one of our number conducts the service *for* the children, but that children and teachers together are uniting in one common act of worship. Nothing will more surely produce reverence in the children than the manifestation of such a spirit as this on the part of the teachers, and if the children are judiciously arranged, and the teachers fairly distributed among them, it will be possible for a very few teachers to control a large number with very little necessity for leaving their seats. I need hardly say that this plan cannot be carried out if the details of the service are not arranged beforehand; but, on the contrary, teachers are obliged to confer with each other in an undertone while the service is going on.

The next point that comes before us presents a somewhat serious difficulty. It is unquestionably the best plan, when possible, that the same individuals should regularly take charge of the service, although by this I do not mean that it would be desirable that they should necessarily always conduct it; but, rather, that the control and management should be in their hands, as by this plan it will be carried on on a uniform system, the children will know what to expect and what is required of them, and the teachers get to know each other and to work into each other's hands. But this arrangement, however desirable, is often quite impracticable, and there is no point which seems to me to present greater practical difficulty than the question of how we can secure harmonious and united action between the different teachers who take their turn at the service. The general plan adopted is to divide the teachers available into groups, each of which takes its turn in the management of the service. By this plan we secure the advantage of the same men always working together, and thus getting to understand each other; but we run the risk that there will be as many different systems as there are groups, with the only too probable result that none of the systems will be fairly and fully carried out. This may be partially obviated by using an agreed-on plan, and still further by consultation and occasional interchange between the teachers of the various groups; but I fear that these plans will only lessen, not remove, the difficulty, and I hope that before the evening is over we may have given to us some valuable suggestions on this important point.

Children's Gallery.

A STORY OF TWO BROTHERS.

Two brothers, one fourteen and the other twelve, presented themselves for admission into Queen Street Refuge a short time ago. It was a pouring wet morning, and the little fellows had got drenched with rain, for they had walked from Chelsea. They waited until the secretary saw them, when something like the following conversation took place. Addressing the elder, a fine bright boy, the secretary said:

"Well, my lad, and who sent you here?"

"Mr. Holmes, sir."

"Who is Mr. Holmes?"

"He keeps the casual ward at Chelsea, sir."

"Oh! the casual ward; have you slept there, then?"

"Yes, many times."

"What does Mr. Holmes know about you?"

"Nothing, sir; only what the people about the street has told him."

"And what is that?"

"That we have got no home."

"No home! why how long have you been without a home?"

"Five months, sir."

"How came you to lose your home?"

"Why, sir, father got out of work, and could not pay his rent, and then the landlord put in the brokers, and sold off all our things, and we were turned out, and we have had no home ever since."

"Then you have a father?"

"Yes, sir."

"What is he?"

"A plasterer, but he has had no work for more than five months."

"What have you done since you lost your home?"

"The best we could, sir."

"Well, what is that?"

"Why, when father got a few halfpence he used to take us to a lodging house in Chelsea to get a bed at night, and then we walked about in the day, and sometimes people who knew us gave us a bit of grub."

"And when you did not go to the lodging house, what did you then do?"

"Sometimes people used to let us sleep in their passages or on the stairs, or in the outhouse sort of places; at other times we went to the casual ward."

"Why did not your father go into the workhouse, and take you?"

"No, sir, he would not do that, because he could not get out to look for work."

"Why did he not go and ask for relief?"

"'Cos he would have to break stones if he did."

"Well, why not break stones?"

"No, sir, father was too weak for that."

"Have you got a mother?"

"No, sir, she's dead."

"How long?"

"Six years, sir."

"Do you recollect her?"

"Oh yes, me and him," pointing to the little brother by his side, "were little uns then, and we used to play about and have plenty of fun then."

"Was your mother kind to you?"

This was too much for the noble-minded boy. His eyes filled, and then came the scalding tears running down his cheeks. The answer was waited for, and those who were present could but admire the boy, and feel there was something noble in one who could keep in lively recollection his mother, who had been dead six years. It was also felt that she must have done her part well, to leave such an impression on the boy's mind. After a little while the question was again asked,

"Was your mother kind to you?"

"Oh yes, sir, and if mother had been alive now, we should not have been like this."

"Is your father kind?"

"Yes, sir, and he often gives us a bit to eat, and goes without himself. Once, when he was in prison, he sent 4s. 6d. to a woman to buy us food, and she got drunk with it."

"Has your father been in prison, then?"

"Yes, sir."

"What for?"

"He was summoned for rent, and 'cos he could not pay they put him in prison."

"How long for?"

"Fourteen days."

"But how did he earn money in prison?"

"Why he cleaned boots, and did other jobs for the gentlemen who were there."

"I see your little brother is very naked, has he got a shirt on?"

"No, sir."

"How long has he been without one?"

"Ever so long he has, and my shirt is only a piece of one."

"Would you like to stop in this Refuge?"

"Oh yes, sir, very much."

"Well, and so you shall."

They were received. They are both nice boys, and have been saved from a vagrant and perhaps a vicious life.

Correspondence.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS IN ROME.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

SIR,—In your record of Mr. Van Meter's work (*ante*, p. 34) among the poor children in Rome, you did not notice his Sunday Schools.

You will be glad to hear that his work is most successful, including as it does many poor adults. In this, and in many other respects, they resemble the Dublin Ragged Schools. For in both cases they include inquirers and converts from that great conspiracy against God and man, Romanism.

Mr. Van Meter gives the following account of the Sunday School held in the mission tent planted in the Via Laurina:—

"On Sunday, November 3rd, I met 80 boys, 33 girls, 7 women, and 5 men. They were organised into 10 classes, taught by 5 male and 5 female teachers. The lesson was 'The Prodigal Son.' The next Sunday there were 90 scholars, 9 teachers; and to-day (Nov. 17) there were 111 scholars, 7 male and 1 female teachers. Of these scholars 11 were women from twenty-five to forty-five years of age, 3 of whom had their babies in their arms. These were formed into a Bible Class. There were 15 young women from fifteen to twenty-two years of age, also 6 lads or young men from sixteen to nineteen. I am thus particular that you may see the promising material we have. These adults appreciate our instruction, and can at once begin to defend their own and our course, and to propagate the truths they learn. May it become soon really a training school for Christian workers."

May I ask the prayers of your readers on behalf of the teachers who are thus assailing the very citadel of the papacy?—Yours, &c.,

A. B. C.

CHILDREN'S CHURCHES.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

DEAR SIR,—On behalf of the Whitehaven Refuge Sunday School I beg to ask if you have any form of service adapted for Sunday School children.

At present the school is opened at 9.30 in the morning, and lessons are taught until 10.30, when a service consisting of extracts from the Church of England Prayer Book is conducted, which further occupies the time

until about 11.30. This service, however, has been found not to be satisfactory, hence my asking whether or not you have any form of services that you could recommend in substitution.

Apologising for thus troubling you, I am, &c.,

Whitehaven, Feb. 19th, 1873. JNO. BIRD, Jun., *Secretary.*

[We beg to refer our correspondent to the paper on "Children's Services," *ante*, p. 88, in which every branch of the question is fully discussed. Our own experience, however, leads to the conclusion that the less there is of the *stereotyped* the greater is the interest excited.—ED.]

Facts and Scraps.

COAL FAMINE.—We are glad to learn that the House of Commons has appointed a committee to inquire into the real causes of the present famine price of coal. Three causes are assigned: 1st. The higher rate of wages and the lessened work of colliers. 2nd. A trades union on the part of coal owners to raise prices for their own selfish ends. 3rd. The refusal of the Northern Railways to convey coals for any persons who do not use their wharves. This inquiry will, we hope, show who are the real criminals, and thus tend to bring down coals to a reasonable price.

FOOD ADULTERATION ACT. — The Association of Medical Officers of Health suggests that the analysts employed by vestries and district boards should work conjointly on some prearranged system, that the work of analysing should be performed in a few laboratories—for the metropolis the Association suggests two—and that skilled assistants should be constantly employed in conducting the analyses under the superintendence of the responsible analysts. To meet the expense of these laboratories it is proposed that all the metropolitan food analysts should contribute according to the amount of work done. One of the most valuable suggestions of the Association is the sixth. It is to the effect that all appointed analysts should be strictly debarred from giving any certificate or testimonial as to the purity or impurity of any article of food, drink, or drug.

FALSE WEIGHTS.—It is not gratifying, says the *Daily News*, to read that in the South London district no less than fifty-five tradesmen were fined for using false weights and measures. The list includes almost every variety of the provision business, and no less than nine chandlers are reckoned in this black category. Out of the whole number, previous convictions had been recorded against fifteen. The aggregate amount of the fines was ridiculously disproportionate to the general nature and character of the offences—£72 14s. 6d. amongst fifty-five speculative persons is a very small sum indeed to pay for employing every day a fraudulent method of making a profit out of customers. The London shopkeeper who on the average is honest enough to be content with the legitimate gains derived from his business, must find it hard to compete with neighbours who can under-sell him by tampering with a scale, or by having pints and quart pots as deceptive as the goblets or boxes of a juggler. But the great hardship of the weight and measure roguery lies in the fact that those who chiefly suffer from it are poor and struggling people, for differences of quantity and price, no matter how small, become serious matters to the pinched household.

EMIGRATION. — The returns of emi-

gration from Liverpool during the year 1872 show the following results:—The total number of ships sailing under the provisions of the Emigration Act was 447, carrying 184,743 passengers. There also sailed 340 ships not "under the Act," with 10,033 passengers, making a total of 787 ships, and 195,776 passengers. As compared with 1871, this shows an increase of 43 ships "under the Act," and an increase of 29,831 passengers; while of ships not "under the Act" it shows an increase of 74 vessels and a decrease of 301 passengers. Of the emigrants sailing in ships "under the Act," 90,253 were English; Scotch, 2,726; Irish, 24,838; and foreigners, 67,926. Of the 447 vessels which sailed "under the Act," 395 went to the United States, with 163,578 passengers.

INTERNATIONAL SANITARY CONFERENCE.—An International Conference is about to take place, at the suggestion of the Sublime Porte, to discuss the internal sanitary condition of Persia, with particular reference to cholera and plague. Persia and the different great European powers have assented to this suggestion, and the delegates of the assenting governments will probably meet at Berne, or in some other neutral city. This conference arose out of the alarm recently created by the late outbreak of plague in Persia, and the danger to which the Turkish dominions, and Europe through them, had been exposed from this source. It has been thought desirable that the conference should also consider the frequently recurring outbreaks of cholera in Persia, and the danger to which Europe is exposed therefrom.

FREE LIBRARY AT GUILDHALL.—The new library and museum at Guildhall, erected at great expense by the Corporation of London, is opened for the free use of the public. The library contains accommodation for sixty readers at a time, and one of the twelve bays into which it is divided is set apart for ladies. There are between 30,000 and 40,000 volumes on the shelves. There is also a public reading-room, where dictionaries, directories, guide books, maps, and commercial and legal works are kept for quick reference. The building will be open daily from ten until five throughout the year. Each reader is required to give his or her name and address on entering the room. The only restriction to the otherwise free admission to the library is in the case of children under fourteen years of age, and of intoxicated or disorderly persons. It is now under the consideration of the committee whether it is advisable or possible to open the building during the evening, and also to form a circulating branch of the library

Notices of Meetings.

OGLE MEWS, PORTLAND ROAD.

THE twenty-ninth annual meeting of the above institution was held in the school-room. The Right Hon. the Lord Mayor presided, supported by Mr. Alderman and Sheriff White, Mr. Sheriff Perkins, Sir Robert Carden, &c.

Mr. Pitts, hon. sec., read the annual report. The attendance at the Sunday School is satisfactory, the average number of attendances in the afternoon being 100; evening 190. The average attendance at the Week-day Evening School is 44 boys and 34 girls. The Sewing Class, held twice each week, is well attended, and is much valued by the girls, being a real help to

them in plain and useful needlework. The average attendance at the Day School is 152, and a most pleasing feature is their very neat appearance, and the orderly manner in which they join the exercises. The Infant Nursery is also a very great boon to many of the poor mothers, who are thus able to leave their little ones in safe keeping. The Library circulated during the year 1,196 volumes of wholesome literature. There is also a Penny Bank, conducted as a branch of the Post Office Savings Bank. The amount deposited during the year was £36 7s. 3d. The Mothers' Meetings were also well attended. The Band of Hope has also steadily progressed in point of numbers, and the committee have great pleasure in remarking the active efforts made by its members to obtain converts to its principles.

The Chairman said it afforded him great satisfaction at being present at that very useful institution. It might be that it was in a back turning out of a third-rate street, but every one who had seen the children that evening would be convinced that the school was doing a great and good work, in a district where it was much required. It gave him much pleasure to find from the report that a very large number of the children were of a very youthful age, because the earlier their minds were improved the more satisfactory would be the final result. He was happy to hear that so many ladies were engaged in the good work, as, without their valuable assistance, it would be impossible to carry on the work—a work that required great endurance and patience, but the seed of which would bear a fruitful harvest. He was very pleased to hear that temperance precepts were inculcated into the minds of the young, and he felt sure his friends the Aldermen and Sheriff would bear him out when he said that the large increase of crime and pauperism was due to habits of intemperance. It was, therefore, necessary that habits of temperance should be taught at an early age. Alluding to the School Board, the right hon. gentleman said there were those who thought that when the School Board was formed there would be no need for Ragged Schools, but that was, in his opinion, a very erroneous impression. There would always be work for Ragged Schools to do, and he would urge the supporters of such schools to continue their exertions in the good cause. With regard to the training of girls, he hoped that their teachers would try to teach them that to be a domestic servant was an honourable position in society, and far better than that of working in a manufactory or workshop. The comforts of life were enjoyed by the former in a far greater degree than by the latter class; in fact, they were in every way in a much better position in life. He then warmly commended the teachers for the interest they took and the labour they devoted to the good work, and urged them to continue the same; and he passed a high compliment upon the management of the institution and a fervent wish for its prosperity.

PRINCES STREET, LAMBETH.

THE annual meeting of this school was held on February 24th ult. Mr. J. Corderoy presided. From the report it appeared that sermons on behalf of this school had been preached on the preceding Sunday at Vauxhall Baptist Chapel, which was kindly lent for the occasion, by the Rev. W. Mayers and Luke Tyerman. It was also stated that the morning Sunday School is attended by 120, and the afternoon by 235. The Children's Church had been very successful, the average attendance being 120; the Ragged Church was attended by 55. A Night School for older boys is attended by about 20. The Penny Bank has 450 depositors. As the lease will soon expire, the committee are in search for an eligible spot on which to build a school, unless they should succeed in getting another building. The meeting was addressed by Rev. G. Hearson, J. R. Gleave, J. Marchant, J. Rhodes, W. Tozer, &c.

Papers, Original and Selected.

SOCIAL HINDRANCES TO RAGGED SCHOOLS.

Though "Religious" and "Social" are not convertible words, yet, so far as practical piety is concerned, they are divided by very thin lines. Hence in the Mosaic economy, the one branched out of the other; and unequalled sanitary laws formed no small part of the Hebrew ritual. And even now, when "divers washings" are no longer ordained by God, we think that society would be materially benefited if many of the Hebrew laws were re-enacted; of course, with such modifications as climate or national habits suggest.

This principle, that the Religious and the Social are akin, is remarkably illustrated by the history of Ragged Schools. Primarily religious, they have had in the sequel no slight social influence. If greater attention is now paid by the State to the sanitary condition of London and other great cities, we think it is not too much to refer the bulk of these social reforms to city missionaries and Ragged School teachers. Thirty years ago who thought of these things save a few closet-philosophers? But through the terrible facts brought to light by missionaries and teachers—it being shown that bad habits ran almost parallel with bad homes—Parliament bestirred itself; and Act after Act has been passed to improve the sanitary state of our large cities, especially the portion tenanted by the poorer classes.

The number of social operations attached to the London Ragged Schools somewhat startles those who only regard them as so many elementary schools. These social agencies did not spring up, like mushrooms, all at once, but they grew up steadily, one after another, the success of one agency suggesting the adoption of another. And now what have we to report as to the number of such social operations? That the London Ragged Schools include 311 social agencies, ranging from Infants' Nurseries and Children's Dinners to Flower Shows and Labourers' Clubs. Some of these have been carried on for many years most successfully, others are only of recent date; but, whether old or young, they

have done very much to improve the social habits of our poorer brethren.

But remarkable as has been our social work, both as respects seed and harvest, it would doubtless have been much greater had it not been for the bad homes and the worse habits of the bulk of the poorer classes. Ragged Schools have from the outset had to contend with social hindrances whose name is "Legion;" and had these been out of the way, we believe that the good which has already, by God's grace, been effected, would be but as the cluster of grapes gathered at Eshcol when compared with the vintage after the Jordan was crossed.

Some of these social hindrances to Ragged Schools we propose briefly to refer to; not merely that our readers may learn what obstacles still beset our labours, but that critics may see that we have not been occupied by any child's play during the past quarter of a century.

I. Dolly Shops.

Wherever there is a poor district there are sure to be found not far off flourishing pawnbrokers. But, in addition to this, the "Dolly Shop," or *un*licensed leaving shop, also presents its temptations to the improvident or the criminal classes. At these shops mere children are permitted to leave any article, but to ask whether the property was their own or not would be regarded as an impertinence. The sum advanced on every article is of course far below its real value, and the interest demanded is exorbitant. Though the nature of the trade carried on is not indicated by the facia, yet the initiated know its character as by intuition.

These shops educate youth into petty theft, and before long they develop into the professional thief. Too many mothers also patronise the Dolly Shop. In order to buy drink they pawn article after article of their scanty furniture, till the room is bare and desolate.

More might be said, but enough has been indicated to show what an obstacle to Ragged Schools are these Dolly Shops, practically teaching as they do—Thou *shalt* steal!

II. Drunkenness.

Most nations have some special sin: that of Great Britain is drunkenness. Other nations may doubtless supply illustrations of

this sin; but England, unhappily, far outstrips them all. Hence in a recent controversy in the *Times* on Christianity and Hindooism, our face was reddened with shame when "Young India," to prove the superiority of their religion over ours, pointed to our national sin, and to wife-beating. Nor, notwithstanding the influence of teetotalism and Bands of Hope, does the abuse of stimulants appear to decrease. In fact, the increased wages of mechanics only seems to serve to put so much more money into the pocket of publicans. The eminent statist Professor Leoni Levi states that the working classes spend no less than £60,000,000 yearly in drink and tobacco. The revenue returns for the year ending April 5th ult. prove the truth of this inference. Last year, no less than £25,785,000 was derived from the Excise; being £2,500,000 in excess of the preceding year. Knowing what a few items make up this account, we can infer how much came from the votaries of Bacchus; thus giving point to a sneer of the *Saturday Review*, "These are the patriots who drink the country out of its difficulties!" But there is another fact equally painful. Almost every year about a quarter of a million persons are convicted of drunkenness.

Need we say how seriously this vice affects our children? A large number, in fact, would not need to attend a free school were their parents sober or prudent. But more than this, many, even mothers, undo at home all that we have done in school. We teach sobriety, they the very reverse. We say, "Touch not, taste not, handle not;" but their parents not only give them alcoholic drinks, but too often *compel* them to violate the pledge of the Band of Hope.

With facts like these, need we say what a serious hindrance to Ragged Schools are the "drinking customs" of the labouring classes?

III. Unhealthy Homes.

Myriads inhabit *hovels* rather than houses. Not only are they ill-lighted and worse ventilated, but, inside and outside, they are pervaded by what a poor woman called "knock-you-down smells." Nor is this all. In one small room, and that in a space scarcely fit for three persons, there are often crammed father, mother, and five children, not unfrequently with a male lodger! Closets and water-butts, never cleansed, are filled with putrefying matter; and

on the cisterns float oil-like gases which waft miasms far and wide. Yet the rents demanded are far from moderate, the united rental of the rooms in these houses producing more than ten per cent. on the purchase money.

Can we wonder, then, that fever and cholera, according to the season, dominate in such vile places? Yet such hovels thousands of our scholars call home, the five hours' comparative purity of the Ragged School being neutralised by nineteen hours of an atmosphere which would kill any one not born and bred there. Till better houses are tenanted, we think that there will remain a social hindrance to Ragged Schools of a magnitude nothing can exaggerate.

IV. Penny Gaffs.

By this singular nickname are known those boys' and girls' theatres which abound in the "slums" of our great cities. The theatre itself is damp, dingy, and foul-smelling. The performance, usually by half-drunken actors, is execrable. The songs, when not so silly as to excite wonder that anyone can be found to write such trash, are loose or filthy. The most popular dramas, too, are evidently framed on the principle that wrong is right, and to show that successful crime ought to be the very acmé of human ambition. Thousands of boys and girls frequent such "crime gardens" every night with all the zest of youth, begging or pilfering to obtain the entrance money. Yet the State, which exercises a censorship over the more "respectable," but equally immoral, theatres, permits these gaffs to sow vice, if not crime, broadcast without the slightest interference.

That these haunts of vice are a great hindrance to Ragged Schools none can doubt. When visiting a penny gaff in St. Pancras we stood on the stage for a few minutes, and saw hundreds of boys and girls before us. A large number of these suddenly ducked their heads. Why? Because they attended adjacent Ragged Schools on Sunday evenings, and recognised us. Thus Satan, by feeding the romance natural to youth, destroys in too many cases all the good impressions aroused in the Ragged School.

Considering how these gaffs not only neutralise our work, but add to the vice and crime of London, we think that the State ought at least to exercise a proper censorship, if they do not think it advisable to close them altogether.

So far as bad homes and public-houses are concerned, some of the evils referred to have been mitigated by the appointment of sanitary inspectors, and the recent Licensing Act. But this is but the beginning of a work which requires to be so broadened out as to include all things which affect the health of the community. But we cannot more tersely indicate the desirability of such further social improvements than by citing the reply of Her Majesty to the address at her visit to Victoria Park last month. The Queen said:—"I thank you also for the reference in your address to the deep interest taken by my beloved husband, the late Prince Consort, in everything which concerned the health, the enjoyments, and the homes of the poorer classes of my people—an interest which I heartily shared with him, and which has never ceased to occupy a foremost place in my thoughts. I thankfully acknowledge that while much remains to be done, real progress has been made during my reign in this direction; and I trust that in every succeeding year there will be seen a steady advance in those works which promote, not only the health and comfort, but the moral progress of my people."

Ragged Schools have done, and are still doing, their part to improve the social habits of the poor; but for the improvement of the surroundings the power of the Legislature is required. Should it be led to *crush* by its strong arm the social hindrances indicated, we doubt not that Ragged Schools, as social levers, will be found more powerful than ever. For if we have effected what we have in spite of such serious obstacles, it does not require prophetic insight to indicate what we shall be able to do for the social welfare of the poor, if we have only to contend with their personal vices or their extreme poverty.

PATIENT CONTINUANCE.

BY DR. CRANE.

THERE is an old story that at the Battle of New Orleans, a volunteer fighter from the backwoods, not connected with any company or regiment, came on the field and went into the contest with great courage and enthusiasm, and that he attracted attention by his intense desire to know the effect of his balls. At every shot he mounted the breastwork and peered anxiously into the smoke to see if anybody was hit. His conduct seems to us slightly unreasonable. The smoke was thick, and he could not see all

that took place among the enemy. Moreover, many rifles were aimed in the same general direction, and it was impossible to ascertain the precise effect of each of them. The extempore soldier ought not to have lessened his share of the victory by wasting time in trying to identify it.

Yet we are prone to copy the example of the inconsiderate and anxious warrior. In urging reforms, in preaching, in teaching, it is possible for a vein of self to get into our zeal, and we become anxious, not only to do good, but to have the credit of it. If a soul is saved clearly and directly by our instrumentality, it is certainly a legitimate matter of rejoicing. If the word of warning or of cheer proved to be just the right word at the right time, and helped a soul through despond, or out of the grasp of despair, we have a right to be glad: and indeed, if we are not glad, we must be curiously constructed Christians. The Lord of the harvest gives these encouragements now and then to his reapers, lest they grow weary.

Nevertheless, even this gladness needs to be watched, lest there get into it something of vain-glory, which if not absolutely sinful in itself, detracts from its value in the sight of God, and proves a "dead fly" in the precious ointment. We ought to look for present results, and yet not be feverishly anxious. We must not be so intent on this divine recognition of our labours, that we become discouraged and half angry if the desired evidence is not given. For ordinary times and the general work, we need a self-forgetful zeal, which cheerfully and patiently toils on, never chilled by delay, undismayed even by present failure. Many a seed perishes in the earth. Of the cloud of bloom which covers the orchard in May, only here and there a blossom produces an apple. The returns of the officers who have charge of the ammunition show that in a great battle, in which thousands of men are killed and wounded, only one or two balls out of a hundred hit. Yet the orchard in October bends under its golden burden; the fields in their season are white to the harvest, and great empires are conquered in war. He who would accomplish anything worth the doing, has need to be persistent in his work. It is "by patient continuance in well-doing" that we attain "glory, honour, and immortality."

The Christian labourer needs a large share of this patience. The seed sown sometimes dies in the ground. The Saviour himself not seldom spake his blessed words to dull ears and hard hearts. He visited places where he could not do many mighty works because of the unbelief of the people. "It is enough for the disciple that he be as his Master."

Why, then, should we be dismayed, if at times the success seems small? The victory is sure. Truth will triumph over error, and right over wrong. Any coward will chase a flying foe. It is only when the battle "waxes hot" that the highest courage is displayed. None but the truly brave stand firm in the midst of apparent defeat.

STRATFORD RAGGED SCHOOL.

FEW will be found to doubt the value of Ragged Schools, or to deny that they have supplied a great want in our educational institutions. The neglected children of our populous towns would, but for the care and training of Ragged Schools, be left to roam the streets, sinking to the lowest depths of degradation, ignorance, and misery; a disgrace to humanity and the supervision of Government, which, in the absence of parental control, should have stepped in to save our jails and reformatories from these juvenile offenders. It must be admitted that the poor Arab of our streets is without the natural blessings that should flow from relationship to his parents and the State. Is he not, in fact, without education except in crime? Is he not at variance with society and all religious sects; having a language distinct from his mother tongue, the *patois* peculiar to thieves and vagabonds, in which he must become proficient if he is to succeed in gaining a livelihood?

Aliens to the commonwealth of Christendom, these children do not inherit the privileges of a watchful training in morality and that kind of knowledge which will fit them for an honest calling? From the cradle they live in crowded dens, in filth, and want of the common necessaries of life, taught in their earliest days to make up for these privations by sudden bursts of intemperance and excessive profligacy, till vicious enjoyment becomes the natural passion, for which all is risked, even reason, happiness, health, and life itself. "S. G. O.," in a letter to the *Times*, writes:—"In language, in life, in habits by day or night, the gutter child differs as much from all other children as it does in its dress and outward appearance. The child of the Fiji can scarcely be more heathen, more barbarian. What a being it is! what a wonderful downward development of our common humanity. Compare it with any nursery child in Hyde Park. Let them talk with each other, and then mark whether they have any subject in common. You will soon discover that the difference of the two breeds is so great, that it is hardly to be reconciled with the fact that they are alike human offspring. Yet, when first born into the world, had a dozen of them been shuffled together no science could have detected which was a Belgravian, which a gutter child."

Now with such pitiable objects Ragged Schools have had to deal. They have tried to effect their reformation, and in many instances the effort has been successful. We have reclaimed some who had been convicted of theft and other crimes, and in spite of the influence of prison companions, we have placed them in positions where better habits have been acquired, wicked associations broken down: and they are at work, not their old dirty work, but in the steady honest employment of the same hands which were once used in picking and stealing.

These feelings led some Christian men and women to establish a Ragged School in that almost suburban district of London, Stratford, about twenty years ago. Planted in Chapel Street, it is located in the very heart of the district where the very poor *hive;* and it has done a good work both for God and man.

The operations of this school include Sunday, Day, and Night Schools In the Day and Night Schools the aggregate attendance is 220.

Every Sunday evening there is a large attendance of boys and girls. They are taught to read and sing hymns; and a portion of the Bible is read, with appropriate explanation. On the part of very many scholars there is a gratitude that has not the power to pay fees or reward, yet overflows with thankfulness and love for the efforts of the benevolent teacher, who tires not, again and again repeating the same truths, almost hoping against hope, yet at last strikes home, and fires the heart as well as brain, and stirs even the thoughtless listener to the consciousness of the high destiny for which his spiritual nature was intended. Instances have come to the knowledge of the teachers showing how these neglected children value the care, the watchfulness, and even the discipline of school life.

In the secular schools cleanliness is constantly insisted upon; convenient lavatories are at hand, and offer every reasonable opportunity for enforcing it. A large Swimming Bath is open every Friday during the warm weather to the boys, and only those who are well-conducted are allowed to bathe. The girls are taught sewing and needlework by the mistress. Articles of apparel are made out of cast-off garments and pieces of cloth, which are ingeniously put together, and afford warm and comfortable clothing for numbers of poor children, who, but for such assistance, would be almost naked or in rags. A Shoe Club is maintained. Twopence is added to every shilling saved, and this is banked by the Ladies' Committee, and expended only in the purchase of boots and shoes. The Ladies' Committee are the life of the institution; teaching providence and economy, and superintending the various occupations of the girls and infants.

The Destitute Children's Dinner Society has kindly made various grants of money, thus enabling the Committee to give a good dinner of Irish stew, at a cost not exceeding a penny, and in some cases only a halfpenny. These dinners are provided every Wednesday, and no doubt contribute to improve the health of many half-starved children.

There is a peculiarity connected with the Stratford Ragged School which deserves notice—namely, that it has a *prospective* endowment which, when realised, will defray every expense; for the late Mr. W. H. Dean bequeathed to this school an eighth part of his residuary estate. At present the exact amount is unknown, but it is charged with annuities amounting to £2,400, and if this school is in existence when these lives drop the trustees of our schools will receive an eighth share. Messrs. Hilleary and Tunstall have most kindly looked after its interests. The Committee have held frequent deliberations on this subject, and after consultation with the School Board and the Secretary of the Ragged School Union, decided to continue the present management. The Committee already hold the freehold of the schools and the cottage adjoining, and with the additional endowment of Mr. Dean they will be enabled to make them thoroughly efficient. Already, at considerable expense, the Committee have complied with the recommendation of the School

Board Inspector to enlarge the Infant Class-room, and to repair the building generally. To defray the costs of this outlay, the funds collected at entertainments, as well as the contributions of several liberal friends, and the first instalment from Mr. Dean's estate, have been applied. The Ragged School Union also contributed a grant to clear off the debt.

Like all Ragged Schools, the Stratford school has not been without rich fruitage. Thus, through its instrumentality boys and girls have been placed out in domestic situations, in the navy, telegraph offices, and in various factories, and are now maintaining themselves by honest industry. A large number of these have received the prize of the Ragged School Union for faithful service.

It is a truism that vice and crime are to be kept in abeyance, not so much by the enforcement of penal laws and the terrors of jails and punishment, as by the dissemination of a sound religious education and moral training. Each in his respective sphere can contribute to this end by seeking to ameliorate the condition of the poorest and long-neglected classes, by imparting the blessings of Christian education, and leading our poorer brethren to a higher appreciation of home comforts and the innocent pleasures of life. Religious education alone can effect this. In youth, too, only, can the good seed be sown, and it will be as idle to expect to find grapes on thorns as to hope that any other scheme will bring about this desirable end.

CHILDREN IN THE TEMPLE GARDENS.

THERE are two shows every year in the garden of the Inner Temple. In November there is the great show of chrysanthemums, which is always duly chronicled in the papers, and attracts a good attendance of lovers of horticulture.

Earlier there is a show of another sort—one which is rather a bud than a flower show, inasmuch as the objects on view are some scores of young persons of tender age, whose homes are in the adjoining back streets, lanes, and alleys, and to whom, by the kindly liberality of the honourable society, the garden is thrown open every afternoon at that season for two or three hours of recreative tumbling on the grass. It cannot be said to rival the other in brightness or variety of colour, but it is worth a glance for all that. You may learn a good deal there about the nature and habits of two very curious little animals, the London child and the London baby. When the day's work is over in the legal workshop, when the lawyer has gone to his nest and the pleader has lain down in his lair, long files of small people may be observed converging Templewards like strings of ants. They come from the shady lanes of Shoe and Fetter—from the gardens and groves of Clare Market, where the evening breeze is heavy with the perfumes of fish

and vegetables—from balmy Whitefriars, where the tall gasometer sheds its fragrance.

A large percentage consists of babies in arms; in fact, nearly every pair of arms long enough and strong enough to embrace and support a baby is employed in carrying a baby. There is hardly a child above the age of four years, and adequately stable upon the legs, that has not one of these small parasites clinging to it. Both children and babies are very different in appearance from the country articles of the same species. They are comparatively colourless in complexion, and smaller for their apparent age or older-looking for their size. Not that there is anything sickly or feeble in their appearance; on the contrary, they are, upon the whole, a tough and wiry-looking lot of children. But it is a certain air of what may be called wideawakeness that especially distinguishes them from the corresponding country product. Even to the babies, they look like youngsters accustomed to shift for themselves.

It is a marvellous life, when one comes to think of it, that of the child of the London back streets. Its very play is a serious matter, partaking of the nature of a struggle for existence in consequence of it always being an absolute necessity to have an eye out for passing cabs and coal-waggons. But there is much more work than play in it. There is probably not one of these children that is not perfectly competent to take charge of a small marketing commission, and bring back the change correct to the uttermost farthing; and most of them are a thousand times more profound in the current price of groceries than a country bride making her *début* in housekeeping. All their early training tends to give smartness, self-reliance, and presence of mind. Long before it can walk a London child is made familiar with all that turmoil which so paralyses and terrifies the country mind. Any one who has examined the composition of a London crowd, on whatever occasion collected, must have noticed that about every second woman in it has a child in her arms. A female of the lower orders in London seems to regard a baby as an indispensable accompaniment on the occasion of a public spectacle of any kind. It appears to be an instinct with her, when a crowd collects for any purpose, whether it be a fire or a foreign prince, to catch up the nearest baby and with it rush into the thick of the throng. The London child thus becomes speedily inured to the bewildering influences of large masses of people, and at the same time no doubt its powers of endurance are fortified by shrewd knocks received in the *mêlée*. It is remarkable how little the genuine London infant cries. Half a dozen great fat rosy country babies will make more noise in the crying way than a whole streetful of town sucklings. It is not merely that the latter are more used to knocking about, but that also at an early period they have made the discovery that there is really no practical good in crying.

Still, precocious little men and women as these children are, they can be children, and enjoy being so, just as much as their country cousins. No one can have any doubt on that point who has seen that gathering at the gate of the Inner Temple Garden on an August evening. It is a sight to see when the head porter, a man of military bearing, standing knee-deep

in small children, reviews the troop with a pleasant expression, and throws open the gate, how the pent-up juvenile flood surges all round his legs, tumbles down the steps (which luckily are low) in cascades of children, and spreads out all over the garden with a shrill hubbub, such as might persuade the intelligent foreigner that the honourable benchers, not knowing what else to do with their surplus funds, had set up an infant-school of law.

But the marvel is that after all this the Inner Temple Garden is not a whit the worse. The walks and the flower-beds are as neat and trim as ever, and the chrysanthemums will bloom in November just as if there had been no overrunning horde of little Vandals in August.

Now, if one of the prettiest and neatest pleasure-grounds in London can, without suffering any damage, be made so effectually to minister to the health and happiness of the little people in its neighbourhood, why should not the experiment be tried with others of the open spaces adjoining crowded districts out of reach of any of the parks? There is Gray's Inn Garden, for instance, bounded on three sides by a population packed as close as sardines in a box. There is Lincoln's Inn Garden, and there is Lincoln's Inn Fields, which would be the finest square in London if some one would only clear away those mangy jungles which only grow brooms in the rough, and now wholly spoil the effect of some as noble trees as are to be seen in the heart of any city. What harm could come to those enclosures if they were thrown open to the small fry of their neighbourhoods like the Inner Temple Garden?—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

BESSIE THE MATCH-GIRL.

BY FRANK S. FINN.

"COME, Bessie, my dear, it's time to get up. You know I've got a day's washing to do at Mrs. Jennison's, and she likes to get the work over early."

These words were spoken to little Bessie Conners, by her mother, on a raw and gusty morning in the month of November. Bessie gave a little yawn, and felt more like turning over for another nap than getting up in the cold air; but well knowing it was necessary to do so, she quickly arose and dressed herself. It did not take long for her to make her toilet. Her clothing was none of the warmest; but the poor are so used to the cold that they give very little heed to it. Mrs. Conners had breakfast (which consisted of some stale bread and a cup of weak tea), and as the mother and child sat down to it Bessie said:—

"Oh, mother! I do sometimes wish there was no getting up at all. Just as you called me I had such a nice dream. I thought the ground was all covered with roses; but I was so ill I couldn't go out. The roses seemed to be coming down just like snow, and there was the dearest, sweetest little girl named Lizzie, in such a nice silk dress! such cunning little shoes! and her stockings didn't keep coming down as mine do. I was just

about wishing I was she, when I remembered you said our good Lord told us it was wicked to covet other persons' good things. The little girl came out and danced on the roses, and seemed to be having a splendid time, when all at once she fell and scratched herself all over with thorns. I didn't wish I was her then, mother."

"God has certainly sent you this dream," said Mrs. Conners, "to show you that wealth does not always bring happiness: the roses looked bright to you, but the thorn was not shown."

"But, still, rich people must be very happy, mother."

"It's not the riches that makes them so, I'm thinking. I know the day I went to lay out Mrs. Anderson's child, the mother said she'd give all her wealth to have her child back; and, poor as I was, I had my girl spared to me."

Breakast was over by this time, and the two, putting on their outer clothing, went out to their toils—Mrs. Conners to do washing and Bessie to sell her matches; and as my story has to do with the latter we will follow her through her wanderings. Matches are not the best stock for a child to dispose of, because most every one has a supply; and people purchase them from the little ones more as an act of charity than from any real need of them. Many an older one than Bessie would have been discouraged at the refusals she met with; but "perseverance" was her motto, and that almost always, in the end, brings success. As our little match-girl came before the house of one of the wealthiest families in the great city of New York, she saw tan strewed through the street, and this, she knew, was on account of sickness.

Bessie looked up and saw that all the blinds were drawn close, and she wondered, in her own way, who it was that was so ill. Presently a chaise drew up to the door, and an old man alighted therefrom. It was the old doctor, and Bessie was bold enough to ask who was the sufferer. The doctor said it was a child, and went into the house. The match-girl waited until he came out, and then asked him how the child was. "She's in heaven now, dear, sweet creature," he answered; and the death of this lamb had caused the doctor to open his heart and give the child some loose coppers. Bessie thought of her dream—the roses were the great house, the thorns the little one's death.

One day, as Bessie was wandering through the great thoroughfare, she went into a church where there was a child's funeral, and noticed that the body was covered with flowers. She wished she could buy some for the one whom she learned had just died; but flowers in November are rare and costly. Two days after the death of the child the funeral took place at one of the large churches, and Bessie followed the crowd, almost hiding herself in one corner. She had worn her Sunday dress on this occasion. When the service was over the congregation were allowed to look at the body, and, as Bessie noticed that many as poorly clad as she did so, she went up to the little coffin and kissed the little head. Simple as this childish action was, it did not escape the notice of the afflicted mother. The "nearest way to a mother's heart is through her child," and the lady, in the midst of her grief, gave a smile to poor Bessie. The people returned to their carriages; and as Bessie

saw the lady step into hers she noticed that she had dropped something, and she picked it up. It was a miniature of a child. She was about to return it, when the carriages were driven off. That same afternoon Bessie went to the house of the lady, and asked to see her, but was refused by the servant. She said it was of importance, but he was about to shut the door in the child's face when a rustling was heard on the staircase, and the lady herself came upon the scene. Bessie at once told her errand, and you may be sure the mother felt happy to receive the miniature of her little lost one. Bessie never thought of a reward, and was about leaving the house, when the lady called her into the sitting-room.

"What is your name, my child?" asked she.

"Bessie Conners, ma'am," was the answer.

"And mine is Mrs. Barlow. Why did you kiss my little Allie, in the church?"

"Oh! because she looked so sweet and good; and I thought if I died I'd like to have some child do the same for me."

"You have a good heart. Have you parents?"

"Only mother."

"Is she poor?"

"Yes ma'am; she has to go out washing for a living, and I peddle matches."

"Is not that a hard way to live?"

"It's better than nothing, ma'am, and if we didn't do so, we'd have to beg or steal. I wouldn't want to beg as long as I could earn a cent, and steal I wouldn't if I had to starve."

"I can well believe that, Bessie, from your bringing me this miniature. Where do you live now?"

"In a small room at Mrs. Glover's, in M—— Street; but mother says if she don't get more work and people won't buy more of my matches she will have to get a poorer place to live in." Had you seen the one little room of Mrs. Conners, with its uncarpeted floor, small bedstead, table, chair, and rickety stove, you would have wondered if poorer accommodation than these *could* be found.

"Since you have been here, Bessie, I have been thinking that if your mother would come and live here and do my washing, and you take care of little Bennie, I should like it very much. I will pay you both fair wages, and you would both feel better than you do now; this weather is too cold for one like you to be out. Do you think your mother would agree to this?"

"Oh! I am sure she would."

"Well, then, if your mother should do so, you can both come on Monday next. As a reward for your returning this miniature, I shall give you this," putting some money in the girl's hand.

"I did not return it for that," said Bessie.

"I am sure you did not; but I want you take it."

"Thank you, ma'am."

How that child ever got home I don't know; she seemed to be rushing along in a dream; twice or thrice she was nearly run over by carts, but

she came out unhurt. When she arrived at her mother's room she was almost out of breath, so that it was some time before Mrs. Conners could comprehend the nature of her good fortune.

To listen to the mother and child, one would have imagined they had discovered a gold mine; perhaps it seemed like one to them. They both moved to the house of Mrs. Barlow on the following Monday, and I am glad to say they did not ill repay that lady's kindness. Bessie proved herself to be fully able to take care of her young charge, and in time became quite a neat sewer, which, of course, made her of much use to Mrs. Barlow.

Poet's Corner.

PHASES OF LIFE.

THIS life of ours is very *beautiful:*
Fresh fragrant flowers spring along its way
Blushing assent while we their beauties cull;
The sky is radiant with its sunlit ray;
And love and smiles wait on the dutiful;—
All have a share. O! life is beautiful.

And *life is precious.* It has links of gold
Binding us ever with their magic might;
And it has wealth which never can be told
Lodged within noble hearts that love the right,
And tireless strivings in the cause of good,
With strong affections for the brotherhood.

Life, *too, is earnest.* There are noble deeds
To be impressed upon the passing hour;
Balm to be poured upon the heart that bleeds,
And given to the nerveless arm more power;
"Excelsior" to be graven on the brow
And on the hand that is to labour *now.*

And *life is solemn.* For it ends so soon;
All that we love the best will fade away:—
But, written as the blazing light of noon,
There is a promise of a holier day
When life will be immortal, and the soul
Dwell where the everlasting ages roll.

Then *life should be sublime.* O! for the art
To clothe it in its true sublimity;
The unflinching courage, the aspiring heart,
The lofty purpose, and the single eye!
Author of life, Thy own high lessons give;
And teach, O ever teach us how to live!

Teachers' Column.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES.

Part II.

Having thus given a general consideration to the service as a whole, we now pass on to look at it rather more in detail. And we shall find that there are two distinct and separate features, each of which will merit our most careful attention. There is the address, in which the teacher speaks to the children ; and there is the preliminary, or devotional part, in which he unites with them in the worship of God. And here I would take occasion to protest, with all the earnestness I can command, against the way in which this devotional portion of the service is too often regarded. Rarely will a teacher attempt to give an address without having carefully thought over beforehand what he shall say ; but is it not also too common for the first part to be undertaken without any such previous thought? If this be so, how can we wonder if the service should fall short of what we wish it to be?

Singing will naturally occupy a prominent position, and is of great importance, for this is pre-eminently the part in which the children can actively participate. Great care should be exercised in the selection of the hymns to be sung. If the service is conducted at different times by different individuals, there should be a thorough understanding between them as to what hymns are in use, so as to avoid the risk of attempting to sing anything which the children do not know. The tunes used should be bright, cheerful, and joyous, and should have as much real music in them as possible. Care must also be taken that the matter of the hymns selected shall be such as is suitable. It is not sufficient, for example, that they should be about children, as seemed to be thought by some one who, on one occasion, suggested to me that we should close a service by singing a hymn, which, although very beautiful in itself, was hardly appropriate to the occasion, being, in fact, one that is frequently used in the chapel after a baptismal service. Then there are those, which although admirably adapted to children contain passages which must be left out. For instance, what can be more suitable than the hymn beginning—

> "When all thy mercies, O my God,
> My rising soul surveys"?

But it would be a great slip if, for want of previous consideration, the school were to be permitted to sing the verse :

> "When in the slippery paths of youth,
> With heedless steps I ran,
> Thine arm, unseen, conveyed me safe,
> And led me up to *man*."

Then it will not be desirable to make use of hymns of advanced experience, such as could be used with profit by matured Christians, although when I say this I am far from meaning that, in our songs, we should never use words which express a higher condition of the soul than we are conscious of at the time. We must look to our hymns to awaken and strengthen, as well as express, spiritual feeling.

The manner of singing should also have careful attention. Whether an instrument is used or not, it is well, if possible, always to have some teacher present who is capable of leading the singing. It is most undesirable there should be any attempt at teaching singing, as, if there is, the service will be apt to degenerate into a mere singing-class ; but, on the other hand, half-hearted, careless, or slovenly singing should not on any account be permitted. It will in the end be more conducive both to order and reverence that anything approaching this should be checked at once, even at the cost of stopping the service for a

minute or so, than that the singing should go on out of time or out of tune.

And turning to the subject of prayer, the question arises whether it is desirable to use anything in the form of a liturgy. Prayer is the confession of sins, and the asking for pardon and cleansing grace; it is the laying before God of our general and special wants, and asking Him to grant us what we need, so far as it is in accordance with what His wisdom sees to be best for us. And it is our endeavour as children to realise communion with our Heavenly Father, so that by such communion we may daily receive more of His spirit, and become more like Him. Can these objects, then, be attained by the use of a set form of prayer? This is a question which is hardly fitted for argument, it will rather depend upon the constitution of each individual mind; but for my own part I feel most strongly that the use of a liturgy is utterly destructive of the highest and best sort of prayer, and that it is especially objectionable with children if we wish them to look upon prayer as the approach of children to a Father, rather than a mere performance to be gone through. Of course it is perfectly open to any teacher to embody in his prayer such extracts from the Church of England Service or any other book as he may deem suitable, but this is quite different to the use of a stated form.

If then we decide in favour of free prayer, we pass on to consider what means we are to adopt to accomplish the end we have in view. One most essential point is to insist upon a reverential attitude, closed eyes, and perfect silence during prayer. No efforts must be spared to secure this, and if it is understood that it will be insisted upon by every one who takes part in the service, there will, I think, be comparatively little difficulty in securing it. Then the prayer should on no account be so long as to be a tax upon the children's attention, or to become wearisome; it must be plain and simple, and confined to such topics as are within the range of their knowledge and sympathy. To achieve this end, the teacher must not only feel active and hearty sympathy with the children, but must in feeling become a child himself; and above all things must be careful and not permit either thoughtlessness or an earnest desire for their welfare to draw him into the only too common error of praying *for* instead of *with* them. It is to me most painful to hear what one so frequently does hear, when some one who is supposed to be leading the prayer of a school, prays for blessings on "these children," which seems to me to be equivalent to saying that the teachers only have to pray, the children need only sit by while it is done for them. Oh! let us not think any effort too great to ensure that the prayers that are offered in our schools should be to the children what prayer ought to be.

In no part of the service will good judgment be more imperatively called for than in the selection of the passages of Scripture to be read. It is impossible to lay down any general rule for this, as so much will depend on the age and mental status of the children. When we have said that the portions selected must be short, clear, and well within their comprehension, we have said almost all that it is possible to say. As to the practice of making comment during the reading, there should, I think, be as little of this as possible, and it should be confined to such explanations of time and circumstances as are absolutely necessary to produce a clear and vivid realisation of the facts narrated. It must not be forgotten how much depends on this power of realisation. Without it many of the most beautiful and touching incidents of the Bible become meaningless, and, bearing this in mind, we shall come to the conclusion that in some exceptional cases it will, in consequence of the extreme ignorance of

the children, be advisable to omit the reading of the Bible altogether. I am quite prepared to find that an opinion such as this will at first be a shock to a good many, and that some will be inclined to join in what was once said to me with regard to this matter, "Then you doubt the power of the Word of God?" To this I would reply most emphatically, "I do not." Were we to lose our faith in that power it would often require a strength more than human to persevere in our work. But what we desire to instil into the minds of our scholars is not so much a knowledge of the history of the Bible as a knowledge of what it tells about Christ Himself, His work, and His goodness. For this purpose we may use many of the stories of the Bible, but we must remember that these histories were written by Orientals for the use of those who were living in the midst of, and were therefore familiar with, the ordinary scenes of Eastern life, and hence the straightforward simplicity of the Gospel narratives became possible. But to those whose entire ideas have been gained in the back streets of Spitalfields or Bethnal Green, such stories must of necessity lose a great part of their meaning. There is a further danger, which those who have had experience of the dense ignorance which is to be found in our Ragged Schools will readily appreciate, and that is, that any stories in which the miraculous has a part may awaken in them expectations which will soon be dispelled in their daily life, and which will then induce them to regard as fiction all that they may have heard from us. Again, it is much easier to gain attention when speaking than when reading, especially as really good readers are so rare, and it is very painful to witness a teacher reading some beautiful parable or incident of the Gospel history before a noisy, inattentive, and unappreciative body of children. For these reasons, then, I hold that in occasional instances it may be advisable to omit the reading of the Bible, but I hope that as the School Board proceeds with its efforts, the spread of intelligence will make these instances fewer and fewer, and that the Bible will be so read and taught in every day school, that in our Sunday work we may more and more have to do with those who have been prepared by their training in the week to understand and appreciate the spiritual lessons which we desire to impress upon them.

Many of the remarks that have been made on this subject will apply equally well to addresses. But here we shall probably meet with considerable difference of opinion between the advocates and opponents of the system of telling stories. Some seem to hold that a model address is one framed after the pattern of an old-fashioned sermon, with introduction, three heads, and application, and regard as an unhealthy pandering to excitement anything in the shape of story-telling, which they look upon as not quite a legitimate means of obtaining attention, and they will tell you that by making use of it you are unfitting the minds of the children for the higher forms of instruction. To such objections I would say that the highest and greatest teachings may be embodied in a story, and that when so embodied they are far more likely to be recollected, and to form a guiding principle of life, than if merely presented in the form of exhortation. Nay, have we not the example of our Lord Himself, who used this method of teaching to a greater extent than any one else of whom we are told in the Bible, and had He not done so, should we not have lost some of the most wonderful and precious teachings the Gospels contain? In speaking thus I have no intention of holding up mere story-telling as the highest form of address. With children of fair intelligence, an address on a comprehensible subject, with a plain and clear plan, carefully wrought out, and well and clearly illustrated, will be more

effective than any mere story could be; but it is not all who have the power of producing such, and a story which contains good teachings, and is well told, is far more likely to do good than a confused, rambling, and uninteresting address. But do not let such arguments as these be made use of simply to save the trouble of preparation; and, yet again, do not come with a half-prepared address, and if the children are inattentive lay upon them the blame which properly belongs to yourself; but, remembering that if not interested they are not likely to be benefited, leave no effort untried until you have found a remedy.

Thus far our consideration has been principally directed towards ascertaining how children's services may be made attractive and interesting. But, however desirable and interesting this may be, we must never forget that it is not an end in itself, but only a means to an end. Merely to interest our scholars and pass a pleasant hour with them, would be but a poor recompense for the time occupied, the labour expended, and the frequent discouragements met with. No, we set before us a far higher object than this. We desire to make our services attractive, in order that the children may, at the time when their feelings and habits are being formed, be brought to regard religion as that which, far from making them gloomy or melancholy, can alone give true and lasting happiness; and that they may come to look upon religious worship not only as a delight, but as a necessity of their existence. Again, we desire to lead our scholars to consecrate themselves from their earliest childhood to the service of the Master whom we ourselves feebly, and yet, as we hope, earnestly and sincerely endeavour to serve, and thus by enlisting their sympathies on the side of what is good and pure, to help them to avoid and resist the evil that they will have to encounter, and to become true and devoted followers of Christ. These are high aims to set before us, and are well worthy of all the energy, all the determination and effort we can put forth. But this is not enough. We may do our utmost; we may succeed in making our services so interesting that the children are eager to attend them, and yet we may utterly fail in achieving any true success. We must not only use to the utmost every power we have, but we must earnestly and unceasingly seek the divine blessing on our labours. Apparent success would be most disastrous if it led to over-confidence in ourselves. Utter failure would be "a blessing in disguise," if it led us to seek more earnestly for strength from on high. And if we do thus use every means in our power to do our Master's work aright, never forgetting to seek His guidance and direction, let us not become weary or cast down if we see no immediate result of our labour. We must do the work, and then leave the result in wiser hands than our own. Earnest, hearty work for Christ cannot fail, and our success may be greatest when the least outward result is manifested.

"The good, the fruitful ground,
Expect not here nor there;
O'er hill and dale by plots 'tis found,
Go forth, then, everywhere.

Thou canst not toil in vain;
Cold, heat, and moist, and dry,
Shall foster and mature the grain
For garners in the sky.

Thence when the glorious end,
The day of God is come,
The angel reapers shall descend,
And heaven cry, 'Harvest home.'"

Children's Gallery.

AUNT LINA'S SUNSHINE.

"WHAT is your name?" said I, as the child of the friend whom I had just come to visit passed before me.

"I'se Aunt Lina's sunshine," was the pleasant answer of Louisa. I looked down into her soft blue eyes, and their darkening depths seemed to be the home of so much quiet, earnest feeling, that I could not doubt but she was indeed a beam of sunshine upon the path of those around her; but I was anxious to know the child's thoughts on the subject.

"That is a queer name," I said, "why do they call you so?"

Shaking back her long ringlets, and looking up to me with those earnest, speaking eyes, she said, "Aunt Lina is papa's sister; she is blind and cannot see anything, not the pretty flowers, not the soft white clouds, nor the little birds. She hears the little birds sing, though she can't see the pretty colours. She feels the sunshine too, but she can't see how beautiful it makes the meadows look after the rain. But sometimes when she is sad and lonely she calls me to her, and I sit on my little chair by her side, and say the pretty verses that I learn in the Sunday School; and I have learned some hymns too, and I repeat those to her, and then she calls me her sunshine. Don't you think it's nice to be Aunt Lina's sunshine?"

"Yes, indeed I do. You are a real little missionary."

"No, I ain't a missionary. I know who the missionaries are; they are people who go a great way off to the poor heathen, that don't know about Jesus, and tell them about him. What made you say that I was a missionary?"

"Because missionaries do good, and you do good to Aunt Lina, don't you?"

"I don't tell her about Jesus, because she knows all about him, and she tells me pretty stories about him." And the child stopped and thought a moment, and then looked up and added, "No, I ain't a missionary, I'se only Aunt Lina's sunshine."

I kissed her broad, white brow, but said no more to her. I did not wish to destroy that beautiful simplicity of mind by praising her goodness. But although I was silent I did not stop thinking; no, my thoughts were very busy with all the boys and girls of my acquaintance. I wondered how many of them were "sunbeams" in their homes, how many made themselves the light of sad hearts by their cheerful endeavours to make others happy. All have not an "Aunt Lina," blind to all beautiful things, and whose heart may be gladdened by the love of a little child; but many have a sick friend or acquaintance to whom kind attentions would come like sunlight, making an otherwise dreary house bright and cheerful; and all know some who are poor, sad, or lonely, and to whom a word of love, or a smile, or a glance of sympathy, would be more precious than the sunshine.

A great poet has said, "A little child in a house is a well-spring of joy." But I would rather compare kind children to the joyous sunbeams that come down from heaven and dance in at the windows, and play on the floor, and make everything sunny and bright.

ELLA.

BEST WAY OUT OF TROUBLE.

IT was a bare and desolate room in one of the old houses in the Coombe, Dublin. The furniture which it had once contained had been parted with, piece by piece, to buy bread, till now there was nothing left; and the wind whistled under the door, and through the empty grate up into the chimney. The hungry children crouched close to their father and mother, to try and get warm. They

had spent the evening thus, and now night was coming to add to their miseries.

What made them so poor? Why could not they work? They could if they had it; but Pat B—'s case is a very common one in poor Ireland. He was a Roman Catholic, a shoemaker by trade, and once he had enough to do; but his wife sent her children to a Ragged School. The father did not much object, and so it came to pass that the children went every day to the Coombe School. On Sunday their mother went with them. They learned a great many texts and a great many hymns; and, what is better still, they learned to trust in Jesus, and to come to Him with all their troubles.

When the cruel priest discovered how things were going, he determined to punish these poor people. This he did by persuading the shopkeeper who supplied Pat with work not to give him any more. When the poor man heard this, he was in great distress. He went elsewhere to find work, but persecution followed him: and this was how they came to be so cold and hungry on that winter's evening.

Pat's temper could stand it no longer, and he rose up and abused his wife, telling her it was all her fault for sending the children to the Ragged School. He then went out in a rage.

When he was gone, the poor mother looked at her children. "We have done wrong," she said. "We ought to pray instead of fretting. God alone can send us help." And they knelt down, and simply told their Father in heaven what they were suffering. Before they rose from their knees there was a knock at the door. It was a master shoemaker come to bring work, for which he advanced a few shillings.

Oh! how glad the poor children were! The mother could scarcely speak for joy; but she lifted up her heart in deep thankfulness to Him who had taught her the best way out of trouble.

Editor's Note-Book.

OUR STEWARDSHIP.

INSENSIBLENESS of others' miseries is neither suitable to our condition as men nor as Christians. According to the former, we are the same with others; according to the latter, grace hath made the difference. Mercy must begin at the heart, but must proceed further, even to the hand. They whose hands are shut, have their bowels shut also. We are not treasurers, but stewards of God's gifts;—thou hast so much only as thou givest. The way to get that which we cannot part with, is by mercy to part with that which we cannot keep. Our good reacheth not to Christ's person, it must to his members. Jonathan is gone, but he has left many poor lame Mephibosheths behind him. We must love Christ in his work-day clothes. We cannot carry these loads of riches to heaven; it is best to take bills of exchange from the poor saints, whereby we may receive there what we could not carry thither. Especially should our mercy extend itself to the souls of others. As soul miseries, so soul mercies are the greatest. They who are spiritually miserable cannot pity themselves. Though their words speak not to us, yet their woes do. We weep over a body from which the soul has departed, and can we look with tearless eyes upon a soul from which God is departed? If another be not afflicted for sin, grieve for him; if he be, grieve with him. If thou hast obtained mercy, thou dost not well (as said the lepers) to hold thy peace. Mercy must never cease till its objects do; in heaven both shall.—*Jenkyn.*

"AS WE HAVE OPPORTUNITY."

"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men." In doing good, our obligations are limited only by our opportunities. We make our mistakes in not recognising them. One man always has the opportunity; another never seems to find it. And this makes the broad distinction between useful and useless persons. Two persons in the same neighbourhood, and in similar circumstances, travel wide apart as they go on in life, because one improves his opportunities, the other does not. Had we the spirit of our Master, we should find life full of occasions for blessing others. There are always opportunities where there are willing hearts. The love that seeketh not her own is quick to see the needs and sorrows of others. It is not want of work, but want of love that holds us back. It has been well said that "there is plenty of work wherever there are sin and sorrow, and there are sin and sorrow everywhere." In little things we may do much every day. A simple expression of interest in the things of another; a readiness to enter heartily into the daily trials and perplexities, joys and sorrows of those around us, how much will this spirit add to the comfort and happiness of a household! Surely we *have* opportunity at all times, in all places. Let us see to it, then, that we have the willing mind—the mind that was in Christ Jesus.—*Parish Visitor.*

Correspondence.

TEACHERS' LIBRARIES—A SUGGESTION.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

SIR,—It is pleasing to find that scholars' libraries are attached to 71 ragged schools, with 17,481 volumes. I know no agency so likely to check that rage for thieves' magazines which is too prevalent in the London byeways as such libraries. The following recent police cases will show how evil are the influences of such serials on youth, with the romance so natural to their age:—Two boys, about 16 years of age, who went by the names of "Dick Turpin," "Jack Sheppard," and "Claude Duval," were tried at Manchester for breaking into a church at Platt, near Manchester. The boys were named Charles Yates and Henry Powell (the latter the son of a clergyman). The lads' heads were full of romance through reading tales of highwaymen, and they tried to imitate the heroes whose names they bore. Powell, who had previously been convicted of theft, was sentenced to two months' imprisonment, and Yates to one month. At the same court a youth named William Pennington was charged with forging a post-office order. The prisoner, who was twelve years of age, had been reading lives of boy brigands. Owing to his youth, he was only sentenced to a week's imprisonment.

Now, taught to read, the destitute classes *will* read, but whether the mental aliment shall be healthy or poisonous depends to a great degree upon the friends of Christian education. That our libraries have been a success in the right direction there can be no doubt. There is, indeed, no more pleasing spectacle than that witnessed in ragged schools on library

night. Eager-eyed and flushed with expectation, the scholars watch their turn, and often devour the first page before they leave the room. If, then, the love of good reading does not check the growth of a taste for literary sewage, I am at a loss to know what can.

But the manifest success of our scholars' libraries leads to a question—never more needful than in these last days—why are not TEACHERS' LIBRARIES attached to every ragged Sunday school?

Doubtless a large proportion of the voluntary teachers have libraries of their own, and so do not require any extraneous aid. But then, on the other hand, there is a large section who are richer in the Divine life than in pence, and a growing number of teachers who have "risen from the ranks" into their present position as religious guides of youth. I need scarcely say that to buy the books—especially the more authoritative Bible cyclopædias—needful to equip them for their duties in an age of inquiry, if not of scepticism, is quite out of their power.

Now if it be permissible for a teacher to be below his scholars in secular knowledge, it would prove his unfitness for his post were he not far above them, not only in piety, but in Biblical lore. An ignorant minister would be regarded, even by the illiterate, as an anomaly; but what can we say in behalf of an ignorant teacher—one who, if he is called to the work by the Great Anointer, is nothing less than a pastor of youth?

Such a library should be simply one for teachers *as teachers*, and not a general one. If it did not include works on geology, neither would it embrace those religious novels which are as unlike real life as More's Utopia is to any existing or possible city. First and foremost should be books on the art of teaching, not written by mere theorists, but by those practical men who have *thought out* methods, and then practised them in the class with almost magical success. Then, too, works on Bible lands, antiquities, geography, and the manners and customs of the east, throw an unmistakable light on the Scripture narrative. So works on systematic or dogmatic theology, together with commentaries, are equally essential. Nor would such a library be complete without books on Church history, modern missions, and biographies of the great ancient and modern workers for Christ. The various Biblical cyclopædias, in which the known facts and doctrines of revelation are summed up, would also be found most valuable for reference, even to the advanced student.

Most of these works, if they are of any authority, are necessarily expensive, as the sale is comparatively limited. But they are not beyond the compass of a joint-stock purse. The Religious Tract Society and Sunday School Union have published works on all the above subjects; and I believe that they may be had on liberal terms of the Pure Literature Society.

I trust, then, that this suggestion to annex a teachers' library to every Ragged Sunday School will be at once adopted. For thereby not only will our less wealthy teachers be enabled to keep ahead of their scholars, but will know how rightly to reply to the cavils of rationalist or deist. But whether this be the case or not, the apostolic injunction will at least be complied with—1 Tim. iv. 13-15—"Give attendance to *reading*," &c., "that thy profiting may appear to all."—Yours, &c.,

Q IN THE CORNER.

Facts and Scraps.

THE LATE LADY SHAFTESBURY.—Two simple round tablets have been placed on the wall in the parish church of St. Giles's, Wimborne, near the Shaftesbury family pew. On the one is inscribed the following tribute from her sorrowing husband to the departed Countess of Shaftesbury :—"To the memory of a Wife as good, as true, and as deeply beloved as God in His undeserved mercy ever gave to man. On 15th October, 1872, she entered into the rest that Jesus Christ has prepared for those who love Him.—SHAFTESBURY." On the other tablet are inscribed the following words :—"To the memory of Constance Emily, a deeply-beloved daughter, whose suffering life and joyful end were a rich example of the truth of her chosen text—'To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain' (Philip. i. 21). At Mentone, 16th December, 1872, God took her unto Himself."—SHAFTESBURY.

ADULTERATION.—The *Pall Mall Gazette* says the people of Dundee have been rather shocked by the result of an analysis recently made by order of the superintendent of police of samples of their daily food. They had no idea of the nastiness they had been in the habit of swallowing. Out of eighteen samples of tea, some of them purchased from the largest tea warehouses in Dundee, there was not one sample which was not more or less adulterated with Prussian blue, blacklead, starch, turmeric, carbonate of lime, china clay, and terra alba, or one or more of these articles. Out of five samples of coffee there was not a pure sample, but all were mixed with chicory. Of four samples of cocoa there was no sample unmixed with starch and sugar. Of four samples of flour none were pure, all being more or less mixed with alum. Of four samples of bread none were unmixed with alum. Of four samples of butter none were unadulterated, all being more or less mixed with fat.

"FAMILY JAM."—Jam-consuming families should carefully ponder Dr. Meymott Tidy's recent exposure of a new source of dietetic danger. At the last meeting of the City Commission of Sewers he drew attention to the vast quantity of rotten and decayed figs now lying at some of the Thames wharves, he himself having seized and impounded several hundred boxes. These figs, which are full of maggots, are used principally in the manufacture of jam, a little fine seed being added, in order to give it the appearance of having been prepared from good fruit. Some honest but epicurean traders consider the addition of common glue *de rigueur*, which, gently boiled and triturated with the spoilt figs, produces a most toothsome and delectable "family jam."

Notices of Meetings.

EXETER BUILDINGS, CHELSEA.

THE annual meeting of the Exeter Buildings Ragged School was lately held in the schoolroom. The Earl of Shaftesbury presided.

The secretary read the twenty-fourth annual report, which was of considerable length, but of great interest. In the boys' day-school there had been an average attendance of 66, and of 30 in the night school. Of girls the attendance was respectively 69 and 14. Average at-

tendance of infants 77. In the Sunday School and Children's Church there had been a large average attendance. The report detailed the large sums paid into the penny bank, and the efforts made in making articles of clothing, &c., by the children. Reference was also made to the labours of Lady Charlotte Gordon, Mr. Stimpson, and others.

Lord Shaftesbury expressed his pleasure at what he had just heard in the report. Since he was first at Exeter Buildings, above twenty years before, he found the workers in this Christian enterprise still adhered to their first principles. This was the more gratifying because there was a sad falling-off in ragged school efforts elsewhere. Considerable lukewarmness had crept over former zealous friends in London. But he was glad to find the same good spirit still prevailed in this part of Chelsea on this subject. He used to call his friends in this movement brothers and sisters; but thirty years had passed away, and he was now an old man, and he would therefore address them as his sons and daughters. Thirty years ago there was only one ragged school in London, that of Field Lane, with five children. But now there were 30,000 taught by 3000 voluntary teachers. Indeed, but for the ragged schools, by this time London would have been uninhabitable. In these schools thousands have been taught to become good citizens, and many translated to the city above. What has been the practical result of these thirty years' labours? This may be seen if they considered the principle on which they had been carried out, namely, the parental principle. Not the hard compulsory plan, now and hereafter to be pursued. Public schools were to be taught now by a set of learned, stiff starched people, arithmetic and the usual subjects, and then the children turned out like a mad dog. But on the parental principle what had been done? He would understate the figures, but he did not hesitate to say that during the last thirty years the ragged schools had taken from the "dangerous classes," out of the worst parts of London, 220,000 children.

OLD FORD.

A public meeting was held at the new building in Tredegar Road, Bow, to celebrate the opening of the Old Ford Mission. Mr. Samuel Morley, M.P., presided.

The secretary explained the object of the institution, which he said was, in addition to the mission work, the introduction of a plan for supplying the working classes with refreshments on strict temperance principles, and affording them an opportunity of spending their leisure time in a manner more profitable than the usual methods. A suitable reading room would be provided, and a good library, with periodicals and newspapers, would be at the disposal of those using it.

Mr. Morley said that one of the most painful problems which presented itself for solution in the present day was the state of misery in which thousands of working men and their families were living, and how they were to be reached. It could only be done by earnest practical sympathy, by not caring a pin whether they went to church or chapel, and by seeking to make them Christians simply. Churchmen and Nonconformists should strive together with the common object; and it was most gratifying to find that in the valuable work that was being carried on, men who had diverse political convictions could find points in which they could entirely agree. He thought that working men did not sufficiently husband their resources, and from personal inquiry he had found that in multitudes of cases, although a man's wages had been increased by one-half, the wife's portion had continued the same. After some further remarks upon the condition of the working classes and the beneficial influences of the institution, Mr. Morley concluded by wishing it a hearty God-speed.

Papers, Original and Selected.

THE JOY IN HARVEST.

Our farmers are commonly supposed to be afflicted with the British malady of "grumbling" to a great degree. But, what with our variable climate, the ravages of insects, and the liability to blight when the crop is ready for the sickle—surely, if murmuring can be palliated in any one, it is in the case of the agriculturist. Even the Christian farmer has to exercise much patience, or rather faith, from the moment the seed is cast into the ground until the welcome crop is garnered. So we can readily judge how his heart is lifted up in praise to Him who made the very "clouds to drop fatness," when the harvest-home is held. For none more than the farmer knows how (Isa. ix. 3) to "joy before God according to the joy in harvest."

But is this not a parable of the *moral-farmer?*—especially of that section who, like Ragged School teachers, are called to cast spiritual seed into apparently sterile soil, and amid scenes which almost crush out all hope? And yet, and that not infrequently, facts crop out which indicate that these moral deserts have many a bright oasis: and on many a dreary alley the "Sun of Righteousness arises with healing on his wings." Then it is that, like the farmer, the weary worker feels impelled to "joy according to the joy in harvest."

Never was this fact more conspicuous than during the past year's history of the Ragged School Union. For notwithstanding the diminished attendance at our *day* schools consequent on the action of the London School Board, and the almost panic-fears of many that, through lack of funds or of workers, Ragged Schools would materially suffer—the twenty-ninth Annual Report showed no diminution in the population reached, or in the religious and social machinery employed for the welfare of our poorer brethren. This fact supplies the incentive of success to the workers of the coming year. We have, in fact, been like some goodly ship buried in the trough of the sea—to emerge seemed to be an

impossibility; yet soon she mounted on the crest of the giant wave: and, though the strain tried every beam to the utmost, yet the gallant ship bore it well, and soon entered the harbour triumphantly.

When it is stated that—apart from secular instruction—there are above 900 distinct operations in the affiliated schools, it will be seen what a mighty machinery we wield for the spiritual and social welfare of the destitute classes. What is more pleasing still is to learn that, amid all the difficulties of the present crisis, the local workers had sufficient faith in the future of Ragged Schools to add last year seventy-two new operations to their former agencies.

It may, however, be said: "This is all very well; but, after all, it is only seed-sowing and not harvest!" We therefore add a few facts gleaned from the twenty-ninth Annual Report to show that much of the seed has fallen into good loam, and so yielded a rich harvest of blessing!

As no labour in Christ's vineyard can be expected to prosper without much and earnest prayer, it is satisfactory to find that 115 Ragged Schools hold Prayer Meetings, usually at the close of school. At these, 1,435 teachers regularly attend. But this is not all; for 1,812 senior scholars also remain, not rarely at their own request. Many, too, of the scholars who are seriously impressed have asked permission to hold such Prayer Meetings either alone, or under the guidance of some specially gifted teacher. Those who have been privileged to be present at such scholars' Prayer Meetings, have noticed how simple, confiding, and *direct* have been their prayers; for they have not preached, but really prayed, and so have asked for something definite, in definite terms. Such true prayer is a golden chain from earth to heaven; and like the key of Franklin, it brings down at once the fire from the land of glory.

Our Senior Bible Classes have also contributed their quota to the spiritual harvest. In 59 schools there are such classes, with 1,335 scholars in regular attendance. Out of these have come hundreds of communicants, and many powerful preachers of the gospel of the grace of God. All these are well furnished against those twin-haters of the Bible, Romanism and Rationalism; for they not only know *what* they believe, but *why* they believe.

Nor can we omit another feature of our work—namely, its

reproductiveness. Nearly 200 are now voluntary teachers in the very schools where they first learnt that man's life is not limited to time, but has an eternity before it of unspeakable joy or woe. Some of these we have seen at work; and know none who show more power in discipline, or who are more earnest in seeking to win souls for Jesus. This fact alone ought to lead both givers and workers to "joy according to the joy in harvest."

But our work is twofold, being as it is social as well as religious—for man as well as for God. Our space, however, will not permit us to refer to more than two illustrations of what Ragged Schools have done for society.

The first proof of the success of our work is supplied by the prizes given to our scholars for good service. During two-thirds of the period the Ragged School Union has existed, such prizes have been awarded with signal advantage. Thus since 1854 no less than 11,619 scholars have come within the conditions on which the prizes were based; those given for the year ending December, 1872, reaching 657. When it is known how stringent are the conditions—even in every case save that of domestics embracing regular Sunday School attendance—it is almost wondrous that a moiety can bear the tests to which they are subjected. This fact alone shows that our labour has not been in vain, and is a cause of gratitude that such unpromising materials have yielded such a goodly harvest.

The second illustration of the social benefit of Ragged Schools is found in the character and earnings of the various Shoeblack Brigades. In the eight London Societies, 384 boys are now employed. These last year netted no less than £11,742—thus transmuting, by a better alchemy than that of Friar Bacon, the London mud into so much fine gold. During the twenty-two years of their existence they have realised the princely sum of £122,823. Many former shoeblacks have reached a much higher social grade—their rise and progress savouring more of romance than of literal fact. But what they would have been had not Ragged Schools and Shoeblack Brigades held out the helping hand, all who know their homes and their surroundings can readily infer without any pretence to prophetic insight.

These few facts, and they might be multiplied did space permit, show how much every earnest worker in Ragged Schools has reason to "joy according to the joy in harvest." Nor do we

doubt that as has been the past so will be the future—at least, so long as Ragged Schools keep to the open Bible. For as the promise is not yet repealed, and as God never means less than he says, we believe that Ragged Schools will ever realise the truth of the Divine pledge, "Those who honour me, I will honour!"

OUTLINE OF THE TWENTY-NINTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE RAGGED SCHOOL UNION.

THE twenty-ninth year of effort put forth by the Committee of the Ragged School Union having been just completed, they desire to submit a report of their proceedings, and give expression to their experience to the friends and supporters of the Society.

The past year has not been one of unmixed joy. Clouds, dense clouds, have passed over some of the foremost men in the Ragged School cause, exciting the fellow-feeling and deep sympathy in their co-workers in the same work-field. In the order of God's providence, the President, the Earl of Shaftesbury, has had to bear the double loss of a beloved and sympathising wife and an amiable and dutiful daughter. His loss was irreparable, but he had the sustaining and gracious consolation of witnessing their strong faith in a crucified Saviour, and their triumphant passage through the valley of death to eternal life. In the same year that indefatigable champion of Ragged Schools, the Rev. Dr. Guthrie, has been called to his rest. His three "Pleas for Ragged Schools" had a wide circulation, and did much to establish the new cause by attracting to it the attention of the British people.

In the last Report reference was made to the dangerous illness of the Secretary, Mr. Gent. Through a long indisposition he was under the skilful treatment of Dr. Cross, a member of the Committee. That treatment, with God's blessing, was a means of restoring him to the duties of his office after an absence of seven months. On it being ascertained that Dr. Cross declined to accept from the patient anything but his hearty thanks, the Committee decided to present Dr. Cross with an expression of their satisfaction by presenting him with an illuminated and written parchment, bound in the form of a book, for the drawing-room table.

As soon as the Committee had again the services of their officers, each in his own position, immediate attention was given to a remodelling and a readapting of the plans of the Society, to meet the altered circumstances brought about by the Elementary Education Act of 1870. *The first step* was the drawing up and issuing a circular to the teachers and supporters of the Society, and such other persons as were likely to be interested in the proceedings of the Committee. The object of the circular was not so much an appeal for funds as it was to give information and encouragement to those co-operating with the Committee, and to explain to them the deter-

mination of the Committee to sustain all the efforts that had hitherto been aided by them, and their willingness to aid directly mission and social efforts that had before been only indirectly assisted. It was very gratifying to the Committee to find that that circular not only served the purpose for which it was issued, but a large number of new as well as old friends responded to it by sending their contributions in aid of the Society's funds.

The *next step* taken was to request the two School Agents to furnish a report of all the efforts carried out in Ragged Schools, such report to be the result of their own personal inspection. The report they made was satisfactory. It proved that notwithstanding the transfer of some of the secular work of the schools to the School Board, that there was an amount of effort of a missionary and social character, as well as of ordinary school teaching, being put forth in all parts of the metropolis, and with an earnestness that was most gratifying.

To encourage and strengthen these local efforts the Committee took *a third step*, and revised their plans for rendering pecuniary assistance. The scheme they laid down will enable them not only to continue the grants towards the salaries of the principal teachers, in some cases increase them, but to give aid towards the payments of assistant teachers, besides largely increasing the payments to monitors. By these means it is hoped that the teaching power in the schools will not only be considerably increased, but improved in efficiency. It is, however, not supposed that this improvement in quantity or quality will secure for ordinary Ragged Schools the character of efficiency as awarded by Government Inspectors. Nevertheless, efficient they have proved—(*a*) for probing the wretched purlieus of London; (*b*) for attracting to their rooms the neglected outcasts of society; and (*c*) by means of food, clothing, industry, cleanliness, elementary instruction, and (*d*), above all, Gospel teaching in its fulness and freeness, for fitting their scholars for useful positions in the world. Proofs of such efficiency as this have been freely given year by year for many years past. Gauged by such results, Ragged Schools have been recognised by a discerning public, as among the most useful institutions of the nineteenth century.

There has been no falling off of starting fresh efforts to meet necessities as they have arisen. In the last Report the number of these new efforts for the preceding year was 58, but in last year the number of these additional operations is 72.

Efforts have been also made to increase and improve the accommodation in several school buildings. Brunswick Street has put in several new windows to improve the light and ventilation. Castle Street has taken adjoining house for a Youths' Institute. Chequer Alley has secured a publichouse, and adapted it for mission purposes. George Yard has taken a fresh lease of the building for twenty-one years. Hamilton Place has erected a gallery, the work done by the teachers. Hartshorn Court has taken the Parochial School premises in Golden Lane, which provides good schoolroom accommodation, class-rooms, kitchen, and open playground. Hope Place: extensive mission efforts put forth and a publichouse and music hall purchased. Moreton Road: erected a new building for a Mission Church, and for class-rooms. Richmond Street: large building secured in Burdett

Street, to which the united efforts of Richmond Street and Manchester Buildings have been transferred. Stratford enlarged the Infant Schoolroom, provided a lavatory, and other buildings.

The numbers of Schools and Scholars, according to the returns lately received, are 181 School Buildings, in which are conducted 212 Sunday Afternoon and Evening Schools, with an average attendance of 29,625 132 Day Schools, with an average attendance of 13,401 (number on register, 17,628), and 139 Evening Schools, with an average attendance of 5,798 (number on register, 8,255).

The Voluntary Teachers, who, from the commencement of the movement have been the mainspring of action, continue to give a warm and cheerful support. The last returns sent in show that the number of these earnest workers is 2,882, three-fourths of whom, viz., 2,107, are in regular average attendance. If there were more of these Christian labourers in the field a larger harvest would be gathered in. For the want of these many roughs are kept outside that could be received into classes and brought under the influence of Scriptural truth, but, being left outside, often become a nuisance, some by filling the room with tobacco smoke, or burning Cayenne pepper, or letting loose a sparrow in the room, or throwing small stones by a catapult.

Weekly Meetings for Prayer are held by the teachers in 98 schools, and to these the elder scholars are freely invited. In some cases the elder scholars have desired to have meetings for prayer specially for themselves.

Senior Bible Classes are fruitful in raising up what may be called "a native agency" for carrying on Christian work among their own class in society. In the returns lately received, 182 of the voluntary teachers were formerly scholars in Ragged Schools. In some cases some have been elected by their fellow-teachers to posts of management and responsibility, the duties of which they are discharging with much benefit to the institutions. The Senior Bible Classes are conducted in 56 schools, and the attendance at them is 1,133.

Many changes were made among the Paid Teachers during the past year. Three masters and four mistresses have taken second-class certificates, and nine others have presented themselves for examination with fair prospects of passing; others are preparing for the next examination. Some of the teachers who were displaced by the School Board are now employed by that Board to give effect to the Education Act. After making allowance for the changes that have taken place, there remain at this time 265 masters and mistresses to carry on the work of the Day and Evening Schools. These are assisted by 349 monitors, who are paid small weekly sums to induce punctuality as well as regularity, and to elicit their best services during school hours.

In the last Report reference was made to Children's Religious Services, sometimes called "Children's Churches." These are mostly conducted in the latter part of Sunday morning. As it is found to be impracticable to get the children together, except in small numbers, from 9 to 10.30 in the morning of the Lord's day, the Committee have been glad to foster every effort for gathering them at 11 A.M. to a service conducted expressly for

them. At 39 of these services the average attendance has been rather more than 70. The gross attendance was 2,760.

A similar effort for Adults has been made for many years, and with marked success, and which have been designated "Ragged Churches." Of these, 72 are conducted in Ragged School Rooms, with an average attendance at each of 83 persons. The gross attendance was 5,906. Nine of these churches were commenced last year.

Bibles.—For many years a continuous effort has been made for every scholar to possess a copy of the Word of God, not on the footing of a gift, but by the child paying rather more than half the cost. Last year they secured 480 copies, making a total issued to them of 38,488 copies.

The plan of awarding Scholars' Prizes has been useful in retaining a hold of former scholars at the critical period when launching upon the duties of life as servants. It is just twenty years since this plan commenced, and in that period 11,619 prizes have been awarded, or an average of 580 each year. Last year the number of applications from 73 schools was 690. Of this number 657 have successfully passed their examinations, and to that number prizes have been awarded. Of the 657 successful candidates, 227 have taken prizes in former years, some twice, others three and four times.

Another useful effort for keeping up a knowledge of the young people as they are growing into years of maturity, is the Old Scholars' Meeting held annually. Much valuable information is often obtained at these gatherings of the former scholars, and an opportunity is gained of giving such kind counsel, and exerting such Christian influence as that information may suggest.

Penny Banks are conducted in 93 schools, with a total of 30,395 depositors. The total amount deposited in the twelve months was £8,243 15s.7d.; but at the close of the year the total sum to their credit was only £1,610 9s. 9d., or on an average rather less than one shilling and three farthings each person.

Mothers' Meetings continue to exert a kindly influence on the members. There are 75 of these meetings, with an average attendance of 36 at each, or an aggregate attendance of 2,706. There are generally two or more ladies to superintend, sometimes aided by the Bible woman of the district. One lady superintends the work, the other the instruction.

Clothing Clubs are carried on in 57 schools, and last year the amounts paid in weekly pence were £927, and all invested in new useful clothing. At the beginning of last winter the Committee were enabled by the donations of their friends to send to 30 schools as many as 1,200 garments.

Infant Nurseries have been formed in schools in addition to those named in last report, with the threefold advantage of enabling elder girls to attend school, giving liberty to the mother to go to work, and last, but not least, proper care taken of the helpless infants.

The Weekly Dinner, as first suggested by Victor Hugo, and successfully tried in Jersey, has been adopted by many Ragged Schools in London with invariable benefit. One school only, in a single winter, distributed 40,000 rations to starving persons, the bulk of them children. The fund for

this special work is mostly provided by the Destitute Children's Dinner Society.

Bands of Hope have been formed in six additional schools. According to the late returns, there are forty-five of these juvenile temperance efforts in Ragged Schools, with 4,285 registered members.

During last year, an effort was made to make the Lending Libraries more effective by adding to the number of books expressly suitable for children. The Religious Tract Society kindly responded by making a liberal grant of £150 worth of books. Nearly 2,300 new volumes were thus added to the old stock in 60 schools, giving a freshness to the libraries that proved most acceptable to the reading portion of the scholars. There are now libraries in 84 schools, with 18,424 volumes.

The Rest for Weary Workers was the means of benefiting 51 of the teachers during last summer and autumn. This effort is one of the benevolent suggestions of "A. L. O. E.," whose annual appeals have always been sufficiently responded to to meet each year's expenses.

The Committee gave their annual invitation to the masters and mistresses to spend a day in the country. For variety of scenery, as well as recreation, for shelter in case of adverse weather, for ease of access, as well as for economy of funds, no place has an equal to Hampton Court Palace, gardens, and park, for such a purpose. The excursions for some years have therefore been to this spot. The day fixed was Saturday, July 6th, when the reunion of 200 teachers and the Committee and officers of the Society took place.

A day's trip to the same place was given to the children of those schools that otherwise were unlikely to have a summer holiday. About 1,400 day school scholars, mostly from the east of London, were conveyed by the North London Railway to Teddington, and then they marched across the park to the tent erected for their use.

The Shoeblacks have pursued their useful career, without any intermission, for twenty-two years, and nearly every year has shown advances over the year preceding. The number of boys employed last year was 384, and their year's earnings formed a gross total of £11,742 7s. 8d. The weekly earnings of each boy on an average was 11s. 9d. The amount at their credit in the banks was £693 8s., which is held for their benefit, and to be employed when the occasion offers for promoting their welfare. Their total earnings in the twenty-two years reached the remarkable aggregate of £122,823.

The schools affiliated with the Society have been under the systematic visitation of the two School Agents, who have given special attention to those schools most needing it, thereby endeavouring to increase their efficiency in the teaching, and their usefulness in limiting the scholars to the lowest of the school's locality. These visits last year were 1,122.

The twenty-fourth volume of the Magazine was completed last December. The service rendered by this periodical to the Ragged School cause has been very great in disseminating information and gathering in funds, as well as adding to the number of workers.

A reference to the balance-sheet will show that the income of the Society

for the last year was £4,099, and the expenditure £4,242. It is expected, when the revised scale for aiding schools comes into operation, the grants in aid will be much increased. The accounts are audited monthly, and reported at each meeting of the Committee by the auditors. The Society is much indebted to Messrs. Harris and Tabrum, who discharged this special duty last year.

In conclusion, the Committee would restate that they have resolved:—

1. To continue their grants to Day and Evening Schools, and in many cases increase them by voting aid to assistant teachers, as well as to masters and mistresses, and by doubling the payment to monitors.

2. That they will not relax any efforts in developing Gospel teaching so successful in the past, and so urgently necessary for the future.

3. That they propose to extend and support Ragged Sunday Schools, Penny Banks, Bands of Hope, Clothing Clubs, Mothers' Meetings, and Evening Classes.

4. That they will give encouragement and aid to such other efforts likely to promote the social and spiritual well-being of the still neglected masses of the population, including Infant Nurseries, Labourers' Clubs, Ragged Churches, Children's Services, Medical and Gospel Missions, Parents' Lectures, &c.

5. That they intend to continue the scheme for granting prizes to boys and girls for good conduct in situations held for at least twelve months.

It is therefore clear that there is a large work-field still to be cultivated by this Society, and the Committee feel it to be an honour and privilege to take a leading and onerous portion of the labour. They earnestly and affectionately invite the co-operation of earnest men and women whose hearts yearn over the lost, and who will rest not till the lost is found.

PROCEEDINGS AT THE TWENTY-NINTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE RAGGED SCHOOL UNION,

HELD AT EXETER HALL ON MONDAY EVENING, MAY 12*th*, 1873.

THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF SHAFTESBURY PRESIDED.

THE noble President was supported by the Hon. A. F. Kinnaird, M.P., Hon. W. Ashley, Hon. Mrs. W. Ashley, Sir R. W. Carden, Mr. W. T. Charley, M.P.; Revs. E. Adams, W. Cadman, J. H. Corr, H. M. Cumming, Paxton Hood, C. Howlett, McConnel Hussey, R. H. Killick, J. H. Moran, W. Q. Scott; Major Cooper Gardiner, Drs. Crawford and Cross; Messrs. R. Baxter, R. C. L. Bevan, W. Locke, W. Willis, the members of the Committee, &c., &c.

The meeting was opened with prayer by the Rev. J. H. Moran, and by singing the hymn, "All hail the power of Jesu's name."

As on this occasion the prizes given for good service were publicly received, the meeting was enlivened by the prize scholars singing some of their choicest school pieces, under the direction of Mr. J. Proudman.

After they had sung the "Volunteer Song," and "Who through Heaven,"

Mr. J. H. LLOYD read an outline of the Report of the Committee and the balance-sheet for the past year.

The children having afterwards sung "Old Black Cat" and "Poor Bessie,"

The EARL OF SHAFTESBURY distributed the prizes to the teachers of the respective schools, the name of each school being displayed to the company as the prizes were given.

The distribution of prizes was followed by the singing by the children of "Song of the Brush," and "Sweet Rest in Heaven."

The Rev. J. MCCONNEL HUSSEY then delivered an address to the children. He said:—

Although I have changed in some respects, yet I trust I have not changed in heart as regards my interest in the old Ragged School. I am glad to see the same worthy man occupying the chair—(Loud cheers, the children joining in the demonstration)—and am also glad to find that Ragged Schools are as active and energetic as ever, and I am sure all present must have had their sympathy awakened by those sweet and innocent strains which have fallen on our ears.

Now I have been asked, my dear children, to say a few words in the way of kindly counsel; but I must first congratulate you on the success which you have achieved in thus receiving marks of commendation. It is always a pleasant thing to me to commend, and I very much dislike finding fault; and, therefore, the scene to-night is quite in harmony with my feelings. But there is a future lying before us, just as we have had a past, and sometimes we find persons who have gone on for a little while very well becoming lukewarm, and lax, and falling back. I hope, my young friends, that what I witness to-night is only an earnest of what your future will be, and that from year to year we shall find many of you coming forward and having testimony borne that you have been doing well.

Now what shall I talk to you about to-night? I have thought of two words which I wish you to remember, and those words are "*Be genuine.*" There is nothing that I have a greater abhorrence of than shams. I hate counterfeits of any kind whatever, and these are days in which I am afraid there are a great many counterfeits and shams. We hear of the adulteration of food—that is a sham. We hear of worthless mixtures being introduced into cloth which is used for making clothes—that is a sham. I sometimes pass by houses that are being built, and I marvel at the materials which are being used in their construction; but when I pass by them a few months after, I find them marvellously stuccoed, and covered with ornaments which give them a most imposing architectural appearance; but this stucco and these ornaments are all shams. My young friends, I desire to press home these two words, "Be genuine." Be genuine in speech. Let us have no "lying lips," let us live honestly and truthfully. But what I wish particularly to press upon you with regard to genuineness is this, that you should be genuine in the performance of your duty. One of the songs which you sang seems to me thoroughly to press this home; I allude to "The Song of the Brush," in which there are the two following lines,—

"If I sit down to darn,
I do not 'spin a yarn.'"

I think there is a great deal of wisdom in those lines, I think there is a grand principle inculcated. Depend upon it that if we are genuine in little things, we shall be genuine in great things. I say then, my young friends, be genuine in your duty.

And in order to be genuine in your duty, you must, in the first place, recognise your duty. Don't try to get a diminutive view of your duty, take it in its length, and breadth, and height, and depth; acknowledge, face, and accept it as that which is binding upon you. Then the next thing I would say is, When you have seen your duty, set about performing it. Don't dawdle; don't try to find some excuse for idling. The grand Scripture principle is this, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." Therefore, my young friends, depend upon it that duty is most easily done when we begin doing it at once without looking at it. I have often been asked, How do you get through this, that, and the other work? And my answer has been simply this, "I do not look at it, but I do it as well as I can." Let me impress that principle thoroughly upon you, my young friends present.

And then once more, if you want to be genuine in your duty, don't object to being found fault with when you are in fault. I know it is very unpleasant to be reproved; I know it is very unpleasant to have our pride brought down. Sometimes if you tell a person that this or that has not been done well, you will get some such answer as this, "I know my work." Now this pride must be rooted out. If we fail in our duty we must accept the reproof administered, and we may depend upon it that it is generally administered in love.

Be genuine also by doing your duty, "as unto the Lord, and not as unto men." If we do our duty in order to be seen of men, then it will be done unsatisfactorily; but if we do it as in the sight of God, if we realise that the eye of God is upon us, then it is done thoroughly; for God can see into corners, there can be no concealment of our shortcomings from him.

Remember, my dear young friends, that if you are genuine in your duty there are pleasant results in store for you. In the first place you will secure that quietness of conscience that arises from the feeling that we have been doing our best. In the next place you will be an imitator of Him who was genuine in all he did, that is, the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the grand example to be held up before you. He was always about his "Father's business," and he prosecuted that business till at last he could declare as he hung upon the cross, "It is *finished*." There was much to discourage him, much to retard his work; but he recognised his responsibility and fulfilled it to the end.

Besides that there is this thought also in connection with being genuine in our duty, that we shall thereby be setting a good example to others, that we shall thus become beneficial to those with whom we come in contact; and nothing is more important than that we should go forth with a determination that people shall take knowledge of us that we desire to walk in the fear of the Lord, and uprightly in the sight of men.

And once more I say, if you are genuine, think of the responsibility which is placed upon you through the education which you have received in our schools. You carry about with you the reputation of those schools. If you do well they are honoured; if you do ill they will be disgraced. Therefore you can become mighty advocates for those schools by walking consistently with your Christian profession and doing the best you can to make yourselves good examples to others.

And now, dear friends, in conclusion—for I must not detain you long—I would have you remember the declaration in your first song, that you are "marching onward." I trust, my dear young friends, that you will always be able to say—

"We are marching onward, singing as we go,"

and that your destination will be

"The promised land where living waters flow."

For, after all, that is the grand issue. We shall have our struggles here, we

shall have our toil and our weariness here; but let us fight the fight of faith well, let us lift up our hearts to God and place our trust in Christ, and then we shall pass through "things temporal," so as not finally to lose "things eternal." May the blessing of a loving God, my dear young friends, rest upon you; may this night be a night long remembered by you; may you as you leave this hall determine, in the power of the grace of God, that as for you, you will serve the Lord, and that you will live not for time only but for eternity; that you will keep your minds fixed upon that glorious future and live in anticipation of the time when, having been "faithful servants," you shall, through the merits of Christ, receive the glad welcome, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you."

The children then sang, "Recruit for the army above."

Mr. W. T. CHARLEY, M.P., moved the following resolution: "That the Report, of which portions have been read, and the financial statement that has been submitted, be adopted, printed, and published, and that the gentlemen named in the printed list be the Committee for the year 1873-4."

The hon. gentleman said: The opening words of the Report, referring to the "clouds" that have overshadowed some of the foremost supporters of the Ragged School movement, remind me of the words of the most encouraging of living poets—

"We see but dimly through the mists and vapours,
Amid these earthly damps;
What seem to us but sad funereal tapers
May be Heaven's distant lamps."

Through the full assurance of faith we know that "these sad funereal tapers" are "Heaven's distant lamps," and so the poet himself seemed to think, for he immediately after says:—

"There is no death—
What seems so is transition;
This life of mortal breath
Is but a suburb of the world Elysian,
Whose portals men call death."

(Cheers.) And you, my lord (continued Mr. Charley, addressing the Chairman), may well adopt the language of the same poet, in reference to your lordship's latest bereavement—

"She is not dead, the child of our affection,
But gone unto that School
Where she no longer needs our poor protection,
But Christ Himself doth rule!"

After laying, with reverent hands, these mourning wreaths on the graves of the loving and loved ones, referred to in the Report, we record, with gratitude, the blessing that God has bestowed upon the means used to restore to his country and to his friends the Secretary of the Union (hear, hear); and we join, my lord, with your lordship and the Committee in thanking Dr. Cross for his free service to the Union, in the person of its Secretary. (Cheers.) The Report refers, at large, to the Education Act of 1870. I well remember that the friends of religious education entertained misgivings as to this measure, and thought themselves fortunate in securing religious education from total extinction by the State. The State, under the Education Act of 1870, as administered by the new denomination of Secularists, ignores religion as much as it can, advancing secular knowledge to the place of honour in its stead. Happily, in some parts of England the Education Act has been administered by the old, old denomination of Christians, and the result has been seen in the increased attendance of children at schools in which religion is taught, and this without any inconvenience to poor parents, their school fees having been paid by the School Boards. Ought we not to pray that Ragged Schools may ever flourish and abound under the fostering care of sympathising School Boards administered by Christian men? The

metropolis is not, unhappily, one of the favoured districts to which I have referred. I might give many illustrations of this, but I will content myself with one, which I will take from the poor district of Limehouse. Without any communication with Mr. Charlesworth, the rector of Limehouse, who is, as you all know, a gentleman deeply imbued 'with sound Christian principle (hear, hear), the School Board took the Burdett Hall, in the very centre of his school population, and within four minutes' walk of his parochial national schools, in which 650 children were receiving a sound religious education. The School Board turned the hall into a first-class Board School for 600 scholars, and this school soon commenced to draw away children from the parochial National Schools, so that now there are 260 vacancies in these latter schools. Limehouse has been divided into ecclesiastical districts, and the aggregate loss in scholars of the parochial National Schools of the entire parish amounts to no less than 600—600 children withdrawn from sound religious teaching by the action of the School Board! Nor is this all. The ratepayers, including a large dock company, have ceased to subscribe either to the National Schools or to the Ragged Schools of Limehouse, on the ground that they are burdened by the School Board with the payment of heavy rates for the purpose of building immense Board Schools in the parish. One by one the Ragged Schools are being transferred to the School Board by the managers, unable to cope with a central authority, armed with unlimited powers of dipping its hand into the ratepayers' pockets. Is the moral, social, and spiritual welfare of the outcasts of London the primary object of the School Board, as it is of yourselves? Certainly not. Its primary object is secular instruction. The Ragged School, once transferred to the School Board, ceases to be a Ragged School; it becomes the rival of the neighbouring National School, from which it gradually draws away its scholars. In the worst district in Limehouse there were three schools—two flourishing National Schools and a large Ragged School. The Ragged School was transferred to the Board—it was turned into a Board School, and immediately commenced emptying the two National Schools, which had to be closed. So that now, where there were three schools, all imparting sound religious teaching, there is now only the one secular school of the School Board. The accommodation for the children of poor parents has been reduced one-half, and the outcast children have been left totally unprovided for. Surely these facts demand the attention of the legislature. But not only do Ragged Schools cease to be Ragged Schools when transferred to the School Board, but the children who supplant the ragged children do not avail themselves of the accommodation to the same extent. This appears from the Report, which shows that in twenty-eight Ragged Schools transferred to the School Board, there are 1,200 fewer scholars now than there were before the transfer took place. In the presence of the difficulties raised by the action of the School Board, it might have been expected that your Committee would adopt a desponding tone with reference to the future. Happily, such is not the case. In a circular sent by your Committee to all the Ragged Schools of London shortly after the passing of the Education Act, your Committee declare that they "cannot abandon the work undertaken more than a quarter of a century ago in conjunction with Lord Shaftesbury," and which has been "adopted by most of the capitals of Europe." The closing words of the Report are still more emphatic. Your Committee will not only continue but will extend its support, and will double the allowance to ministers, and make grants to assistant teachers. All honour to your Committee for the noble stand that it is making for religious education. If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare him-

self for the battle? Earnest-minded men and women in the metropolis are again invited by your Committee to range themselves on the Lord's side.

Forth from our Union many a warrior brave,
The flesh to vanquish and the soul to save,
Flings the white banner of the Cross abroad,
And hies to battle with the foes of God;
Crown'd with Salvation's beaming-helmet plume,
Arm'd with Faith's shield to quench the arrowy doom,
Sandall'd with Peace, yet belted with a sword—
The Spirit faulchion, Christ's eternal Word!
Hark, through the streets of London rings his cry—
On for our Union—on to Victory!
Let sin, the world, and Satan wrest no more
Salvation from the children of the poor. (Cheers.)

Judge Payne used to give you his 1001st effort. You will pardon my first. (Cheers.) Look at yonder ragged urchin crouching under an archway, poring, perhaps, over the lives of celebrated highwaymen, or tumbling in the gutter, or dozing on a doorstep—a more loathsome object it is scarcely possible to conceive. His miserable form is wasted with want; his cheek is wan; his eyes are sunken; his face bears that prematurely old look which is so repulsive in children; low cunning is stamped on every lineament; his poor rags are barely held together with pieces of string; his hair is matted with dirt, and (tell it not in polite society) swarming with vermin. He looks up as we pass and whines out a petition for alms. And yet that loathsome object possesses that which, if there be any truth in Christianity, will survive the fall of empires, the wreck of worlds, the destruction of sun and moon and stars—he possesses an immortal soul! When all these things shall have passed away, that soul shall continue to exist. My dear friends, the Lord of glory bowed the heavens, and came down, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, to save you. Will not you stoop to save this outcast little one? Oh, what a glorious thought that, through your instrumentality, by God's blessing, this loathsome object may become an ornament of that society of which he is now the scourge (cheers), and hereafter may shine as a star, for ever and ever, in the diadem of King Jesus! (Loud cheers.)

The resolution having been adopted, the children then sang "Ragged Boy's Plea," after which the collection was made. Then came another song from the children, "Catch the Sunshine."

The Rev. PAXTON HOOD said:—I have to propose a resolution which I am sure will recommend itself to all our hearts—"That this meeting, in acknowledging the value of the many agencies affiliated with the Ragged School Union, desires to again record its gratitude to Almighty God for past successes, and pledges itself to sustain the extensions for promoting the moral and spiritual welfare of the poor, as proposed by the Committee in their Report of this day." I am sure your lordship and the whole of this meeting must have derived considerable encouragement from a paragraph in to-day's *Times*, bearing immediately on the spirit and purpose of this resolution. In that paragraph, after mention has been made of a diminution in the aggregate amount of crime in the metropolis and the country generally, it is observed that that diminution is in a great degree attributable to the influence of Ragged Schools. I am sure you will all recognise in that testimony a voice calling upon you to go forward and to exert yourselves, even more than you have hitherto done, in this glorious work. I cannot help regarding the Ragged School agency as somewhat resembling that process of farming by which that nasty stuff called subsoil, being of all sorts of colours and qualities, and ap-

parently worthless, white clay, black sludge, and I know not what else that that looks unpleasant, unweldable, and valueless, is exposed to the air, and converted into useful and productive soil. I regard the operations of Ragged Schools as a turning up of moral subsoil, the raising of the dark worthless mass in the population of this country into a grand source of national material wealth. And I would say, with all respect for my dear young friends behind me, that I cannot look upon the grand and magnificent spectacle which they now present without feeling what they might have been had they been left down where they were, had they not been thus made contributors to the wealth, the usefulness, and the piety of this great country. At one period thoughtful men were looking with moody visages upon what they termed "the dangerous classes," and I am bound to confess that I have been among the number of the most fearful and terror-stricken. "The dangerous classes" of this great capital have filled the minds of many of us with awe and dread. We are all in the habit of looking upon such places as the East-end of London as black spots on the face of the country. I hope you will all excuse me for using here a rather peculiar image for the purpose of illustration. We have all probably seen in the neighbourhood of a house a vast dungheap—an unsightly mass of corruption, which, if allowed to remain, would tend to breed fever and pestilence for the whole community. Now what would the scientific man or the farmer tell us with regard to that dungheap? Why, that if it be removed to its proper position, instead of being a source of corruption, instead of fever hybernating there, there will be food for the sustenance of the population, life as opposed to death. So as regards the "dangerous classes," you must attack them, as it were, through the young. You must approach and elevate them through the young. You must in that way endeavour to inspire them with a love of truth, and to convert them from sneaks and cowards into upright and brave men. You must try and baptize the young with a spirit of holiness and piety, and by-and-by you will find that in very many instances not only will you have produced a love of truth and of honesty, but will have led those among whom you have laboured to realise the words—

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear."

The blessed effects of the operations of such schools as yours are beautifully illustrated by such a magnificent spectacle as is presented this evening by the children and young people assembled on the platform. You have, my friends, everything to encourage you. Your hearts must certainly have been gladdened and melted as you saw his lordship standing there like a loving father in the midst of a large family, or the chief of some vast clan, surrounded by young clansmen and clanswomen, distributing the prizes for good conduct. It is a glorious thing for people to have commenced doing good while they are young. The noble lord is in that happy position. In his early days he was constantly tending and watching over the interest of the young and the weak, and he is still engaged in the same blessed work. Long may it be ere his sun sets; long may it be ere that shock of corn is gathered to the heavenly store-house. How glorious and beautiful was it to see him standing there, with that benevolent loving face, that genial, kindly hand, distributing the prizes which had been so well earned by children belonging to the various schools. May God make those schools more and more prosperous year by year! For my own part, whatever may be said in opposition to them, I do believe that Ragged Schools are an instrumentality appointed by God for purifying the moral atmosphere of society, driving away social pestilence, and creating spiritual life and vigour in the land. It was not likely that there would

be no carpers and quibblers in reference to such a work. I have often been struck with the sacred story of the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem by Nehemiah. You all remember what opposition Nehemiah met with from a certain orator named Sanballat. When Sanballat and his friend the Horonite heard that Nehemiah had builded the wall, but that at that time he had not set up the doors upon the gates, he sent to Nehemiah asking him to come and talk over the matter with him in the plain of Ono. What an appropriate name! If you look at the 6th chap. of the book of Nehemiah, you will find that it was in the plain of of O-*no* that Sanballat wanted Nehemiah to meet him; and ever since that time there have been Sanballats wanting to stop God's good works, and trying to get God's people to meet them in the plain of "O-*no*"! Nehemiah would not waste time that was so precious by accepting the invitation addressed to him; nor must we allow ourselves to be interrupted in the good work of this Union by carpers and quibblers who ask us to meet them in the plain of O-no. When a man wishes to do good, he should not argue about doing it, but go and do it. I have had my attention called by several people during the last few weeks to a sort of impious *jeu d'esprit* which has, I believe, been read very largely through the agency of the circulating libraries. I allude to a novelette entitled "Joseph Davidson." You need not trouble yourself about that book. It is one of those things which are delighted in by people who, not being engaged in any good work themselves, find pleasure in endeavouring to annoy and embarrass persons who are endeavouring to advance the cause of God. My dear friends, it is the glory of Ragged School teachers that they teach religious truth to children. I do not mean to say that your "ism" is mine, or that mine is yours, but I do affirm that you all endeavour to teach Bible truth, that you have all a firm belief that man has a living immortal soul, that you have all a clear conception that the Almighty God, our heavenly Father, has not deserted this world—that he is a real, personal, loving Being, and has sent a message to our world through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to tell us how much he loves us and how much he has done for us; and I say that if, holding those grand truths firmly yourselves, you endeavour to carry them to the homes and hearts of the poor, it will be seen more and more that there is power in them to elevate the character of the poor, to make them good members of society, and, with God's blessing, and under the influence of his Spirit, to prepare them for a better world. I heartily move the resolution which has been entrusted to me, and beg to assure you that I entirely sympathise with you in the work in which you are engaged.

The resolution having been adopted,

Mr. ROBERT BAXTER said: My Christian friends, I have been commissioned by the Committee to propose, second, and put to the meeting a resolution, but before reading it I wish to say a few words, and I promise not to trespass long upon your time. Ragged Schools, what are they? In the case of this metropolis 50,000 children rescued from vice, brought up, as it were, one by one, from the lowest depths of misery, and gradually improved in their garments, their talk, and their habits. The Gospel is set before them, Christ is preached to them, they are exhorted to seek him, they are taught to look to him as the Saviour; and after all this they go back to their homes carrying there the very message they have heard, the very lesson they have been taught. What a blessing to a city is this—50,000 children of the very lowest and most neglected class, gathered in at the Ragged Schools, and then sent back to their homes to become missionaries and teachers to their parents! Again, we have a band of 3,000 voluntary teachers. I hope the meeting will take in that idea—3,000 voluntary teachers devoted

to the training and teaching of poor children! These teachers are messengers of Christ, they go forth with the love of Christ, they convey to the children the precious words of Christ, and they act in accordance with those touching words which our Lord addressed to Simon shortly before he finished his work, "Feed my lambs." One word more: these teachers must go forth in the faith of Christ, and with prayer to Christ, for wisdom, for guidance, and for love, that they may be able to set a good example to those amongst whom they laboured. If teachers go forth in this way, exhibiting the purity and loveliness of the Christian character, in the faith of Christ, with prayer to Christ, and with a desire to impress on children the love of Christ, God will bless their efforts by the power of the Holy Spirit written upon the hearts of the children. Let them carry these children with them in thought, in their daily prayers to heaven, and they may confidently expect that fruit will abound and blessings increase. I have now to move the resolution to which I alluded, and it is this:—"That this meeting heartily thanks the noble Chairman, the Earl of Shaftesbury, for presiding on this occasion; and desires with the deepest gratitude to acknowledge the fostering care of God, which has enabled his lordship to preside at every anniversary of this Society." Nearly thirty years of service has the noble lord rendered to this Society; more than thirty years of debt do we owe to his lordship for that service. (Loud cheers.) I have spoken of 50,000 scholars, and of 3,000 teachers. Let me now speak of the man who first encouraged the work, the man who has always fostered it, the man who has ever been first and foremost in our body, the man who has been the great instrument of gathering together the bands of children who are now assembled on the platform! During the last thirty years hundreds and thousands of children have been reclaimed from degradation and vice, and many of them have not only been placed in a position to earn an honest livelihood, but after having been the pests have become ornaments and most useful members of society. And what a debt of gratitude do we owe to the noble lord, especially for the noble example which he has set in the work by which all this has been accomplished. Would that there were many others of high standing in society willing to devote their lives as he has devoted his to the good of their fellow-creatures! He has always been ready to exert himself in the cause which this Union was founded to promote; he has always justly been regarded as the founder of this great Institution; and there rests upon his head the blessing of every person who has been trained in a Ragged School, and of every person who, either as a teacher or supporter, is connected with Ragged Schools, while all of us in this great meeting look up to him and welcome him as the father of the cause. I have great pleasure in moving this resolution, and I do so the more heartily because I feel that, as there is no other institution in the kingdom that can occupy the sphere of this, no other that goes where this goes, no other that does what this does, so there is no other member of society who has occupied the same sphere, or who has gone where or done what our noble president has done—no other who has so devoted his strength, his talents, his life, to the advocacy and advancement of the great cause in which we are engaged.

The motion having been adopted by acclamation, the children then sang the concluding hymn, "Shall we gather at the river?"

The Earl of SHAFTESBURY, who was greeted with loud and long-continued cheers, then said: Mr. Baxter stated just now that this is the twenty-ninth anniversary at which I have occupied the chair. I have to tell you, and I record it with feelings of deepest gratitude to

Almighty God, that for a space of forty-two years I have engaged to take the chair at almost numberless anniversaries, and that I can only recall to mind one or two instances in which I have been prevented by ill-health from discharging the duty which I had undertaken.

And now I look at the clock, and I feel that you ought to be dismissed; but I also feel that it would be wrong on such an occasion as this to let you go without one word of congratulation, and without calling upon you to join with me in expressing everlasting thankfulness to Almighty God for the manner in which he has prospered this movement from the very smallest beginning until it has attained the magnitude in which we now see it. Notwithstanding all that has beset us, we are still alive, and not only alive, but prosperous, and not only prosperous, but by God's grace more determined than ever to go forward in the course which we have pursued. (Cheers.) All our dangers are from without. We are beset by many enemies—enemies of various kinds, but we have no dangers within. We have not, I rejoice to say, any disease, by whatever name it may be called, which is playing upon our vitals; nay, we are more sound, more healthy, more vigorous than ever; and I here wish to tender my most grateful thanks to the Committee, to the various conductors and managers of all the schools, to the teachers, men, women, aye, and the children too, for it is by the example of the children that we are enabled to hold our own—I say I wish to offer my most humble and sincere thanks to all for the resolute manner in which they have met to-day, for the determination which they have exhibited, and for coming forward and saying in effect that, God helping them, the children of England shall be brought up in the faith and fear and nurture of the Lord. (Cheers.) Now then, I ask, whether, after what you have seen and heard to-day, will you relax in your efforts? (Cries of "No, no.") Will your hearts fail, will your courage be abated, will your hopes be diminished? (Reiterated cries of "No.") I say that if any craven spirit creeps into your constitution and your heart, you are unworthy of the success which God has given you, you are unworthy of the work to which you have been invited, you are unworthy of the great and glorious responsibilities to which God has been pleased to call you. But I am quite certain that you have no cause for apprehension; I am quite certain that you are now concentrating your efforts; I am quite certain that you now see that you have greater dangers to contend with at present than have presented themselves at any previous period in the history of the Society. You must make every effort to retain the children within your embrace; you must make every effort to render your system of teaching as attractive as possible; you must make every effort to show that your system has a superiority over this thing, called a national system, which has been established by law in this country. You must do all that in you lies to show that your system is, under almost every aspect, superior to the Board-school system; and if they should be able to prove that in subjects ending with isms and with ologies they have a superiority over you, you must show on the other hand, that in all that concerns the training of the heart, or institution into the Christian life, and preparation for the battle of life; in all that concerns domestic virtue and tends to make men good members of society and to prepare them for heaven, your system is by far the most effective, and that it trains children to perform their duty in "that state of life unto which it has pleased God to call them."

The children just now sang a song which touched me very much, and I have no doubt touched many others very much, and which reminded me of something which I had to say to you. That song commenced as follows:—

"Out in the gloomy night, sadly I roam;
I have no mother dear, no pleasant home;
Nobody cares for me, no one would cry
Even if poor little Bessie should die."

I should for one—(loud cheers)—and you would too. And now I want to announce something to you. There may be many little Bessies without father or mother. Well, we are providing at this moment for fifty of those little Bessies. The other day I put out an appeal on their behalf in connexion with Miss Rye's emigration scheme. A considerable amount has already been subscribed, and we are now in a position to receive at the Home at Peckham fifty children, notwithstanding dirt and rags, with a view to their being provided for in the way that I have indicated. (Cheers.) All the little children who are received will be sent out to Canada, and those who have been sent out before have been exceedingly well cared for when they got there. Only the other day I heard of a little child four years old crossing the Atlantic, and before she arrived at Toronto there were ten families competing for the adoption of that little girl. A short time ago I picked up in the streets of Whitechapel a little girl nine or ten years old, in the most miserable state in which I ever saw a child. Her body was concealed and covered with sores, and she was altogether in such a pitiable state of filth and wretchedness as I never scarcely witnessed before. She was sent to Canada, and entered the family of a tradesman in Ontario; and so charmed were he and his wife with that little thing that they did not adopt her merely as a servant, but as their own child. (Cheers.) Well, we are now going to provide for fifty more of these poor little fatherless and motherless children. Up to the beginning of June we shall be ready to consider the cases of any who may be offered, and our desire is that in addition to receiving earthly blessings they may be trained for eternity.

I have said in a speech that Ragged Schools are "doomed." I have been called to account for using that expression. But did I mean that Ragged Schools conducted by such as you were doomed? Did I intend to speak of the Ragged Schools of those who acted under a deep sense of responsibility to God, and a deep regard for the woes of humanity? No, I meant that Ragged Schools were "doomed" by men of starch and buckram; by men who look upon human beings as machines, to be fitted only for this life, and having nothing to do with the life to come. That is the animal of whom I was thinking when I said that Ragged Schools were "doomed," not of such as you who are animated by love to the Lord Jesus Christ, and who, so far from regarding Ragged Schools as doomed, will, I am sure, display tenfold greater energy for their development and extension, and will determine that so long as there is a soul to be saved, misery to be relieved, and ignorance to be enlightened, they will never desert the cause which this Society was founded to promote. I speak more feelingly every year on this subject, because I feel that every year brings me nearer to my last home.

The children then sang "God save the Queen," and the meeting closed with the benediction.

Teachers' Column.

HOW TO DEAL WITH CHILDREN.

THE annual Prayer Meeting and Communion Service of the teachers in connection with the Lambeth, South London, and Clapham auxiliaries of the Sunday School Union attracted a large assembly at the Metropolitan Tabernacle. The area, which was reserved for communicants, was crowded, and some hundreds occupied the galleries. A selection of hymns, which had been printed for circulation, was sung, and the devotions were led by Sunday-school teachers of various denominations.

The Rev. C. H. Spurgeon presided, and delivered an address to the teachers, founded on the fourteenth verse of the tenth chapter of Mark. It was not often that the Saviour showed anger, but he could be angry, for anger at what is wrong is an essential part of a perfect character. On this occasion he was much displeased, and doubtless spoke with severity the very sweetest words that ever fell from human lips, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God." The action of the disciples had probably a good motive at the back of it; they probably kept back the children out of intense respect for their Master, and a regard for his comfort.

That which is done under a good motive may not always be a good thing, and Jesus Christ may still be much displeased at some of those things which are now done, even in Sunday-schools. He could conceive of God blessing the efforts of an unconverted teacher, as Elijah was fed with food carried by ravens, which by nature are more likely to tear and devour; an unconverted teacher may be God's raven, but he did not think it often proved so. He rejoiced that unconverted teachers were fewer than they were at one time; and he could scarcely conceive how they could feel love for children's souls when they did not feel sufficient love for their own to lead them to seek salvation for themselves. The unconverted teacher's ungodliness, prayerlessness, Christlessness may be one of the hindrances which prevent little children coming to Christ.

Another such hindrance might arise from the inconsistencies of teachers in their life during the week. He heard once of a teacher neglecting a class in the week to go to a theatre—that was a shameful thing; and of another who gave way to passionate language in the presence of the father of one of his class, which caused the father to go home and remark that he did not think the teacher's instructions could be of much account. "Little pitchers" have proverbially "long ears." Teachers should be very careful not to pull down in the week what they try to build up on the Sunday. Dilatory teachers, who come late, with lessons unprepared, and go through their work as though they felt it was an unfortunate thing for them that anybody had ever invented Sunday-schools, would be likely to discourage earnestness in their scholars. Ill-temper in teachers would be another hindrance; if they lost their tempers with children, however trying, they lost the hope of doing them good.

Another cause which might prevent children coming to Christ was unorthodox teaching. "You be a good child and love Jesus"—that is not the Gospel; if preached from the pulpit, it would be characterised as legalist, a doctrine of good works. There is not one Gospel for adults and another for children. The Gospel teaches "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ," and love to Christ will follow. For children as well as others

> "There is life in a look to the Crucified One."

He would teach them the Gospel rather

than the "goody" teaching which they had in some "goody" books, in which all the bad children get eaten by lions, and all the good children get pretty gifts —which was foolish, because it does not happen so in life.

Teachers should seek the salvation of their children *as children*. Faith is the great duty of the Gospel; and it is for teachers to press home on children the duty of at once giving their hearts to Christ. Teachers should not neglect any little signs which children manifest in this direction, nor expect to see brighter evidences of conversion in children's lives than are expected from elder persons. A child is disobedient or quick-tempered, and is rebuked with, "Jane, how can you love the Saviour and act thus?" Suppose he was to call at the house and say to that child's mother, "Now, mistress, how can *you* love Jesus Christ, if *you* act thus?" If grown-up people were judged by as harsh a standard as was applied to children there were very few who would be found giving sufficient evidences of Christianity. Imperfection was incidental to human life, and he did not expect a child to be an angel before it was a saint. He should be satisfied with as good evidences of grace in a child as he was satisfied with in anybody else—brokenness of heart and reliance upon Jesus Christ.

Neither must they expect too much knowledge of theology from children. A person who had never attended a religious service, but had only learned the English language, would be puzzled on first hearing much of the "theological jargon" which was well understood by regular worshippers. Children do not readily understand theological words; in conversing with them teachers must not get on high stilts, but use child-English. Children must have a good bit of "crumb," with warm milk over it, and the "sugar" of illustration; and the "crust" must be put by for father and mother, who like crust. Little children, when converted, should be received into the Christian Church, however young they may be. They have as much right in the Church as adults, for "of such is the kingdom of heaven." There are some points in which children are more like Christ than adults. Without the Holy Spirit, we grow away from good, and manhood ripens to rottenness. If we are not in some respects big children, we are not like "the holy child Jesus," we are not God's children.

Children's Gallery.

A WILL AND A WAY.

My dear little friends, I dare say many of you have Ragged School collecting boxes, and I am going to tell you about a little girl who thought of a plan of getting more money for hers.

Florence Tregellis was on a visit to her aunt at Bath, and she thought she might learn a very pretty piece of poetry, and ask every one to whom she repeated it to give her a penny for her box. She wrote to her mamma telling her of the plan, who soon sent her a very pretty piece of poetry about the good going to a Ragged School had done to a little boy called Jemmy Fowler.

Very few of Florence's friends either in Bath or London refused to give her the penny for her diligence.

I have read of a poor old man who, after going to a missionary meeting, was much grieved to think that he had nothing to give for the good of the heathen.

He wished to do more than to pray for them, but he was very poor. He

lived by selling fruit and vegetables out of his little garden, so he thought of setting aside one gooseberry-bush, and giving the money he got for his gooseberries to the missionary-box. He netted it carefully over to keep off the birds and called it the missionary tree. I am sure the blessing of the Lord would be given with his money.

Have you not, dear children, *something* like old Joseph which you can give to aid the homeless and destitute children?

ELLA.

Editor's Note-Book.

SILENT MESSENGERS.

"It is my conviction," says a popular writer, "that more will have to be done through the press. . . . . Tracts can go everywhere. Tracts know no fear. Tracts never tire. Tracts never die. Tracts can be multiplied without end by the press. Tracts can travel at little expense. They run up and down like the angels of God, blessing all, giving to all, and asking no gift in return. They can talk to one as well as to a multitude; and to a multitude as well as to one. They require no public room to tell their story in. They can tell it in the kitchen or the shop, the parlour or the closet, in the railway carriage or in the omnibus, on the broad highway or in the footpath through the fields. They take no note of scoffs, or jeers, or taunts. No one can betray them into hasty or random expressions. Though they will not always answer questions, they will tell their story twice, or thrice, or four times over, if you wish them. And they can be made to speak on every subject, and on every subject they may be made to speak wisely and well. They can, in short, be made vehicles of all truth, the teachers of all classes, the benefactors of all lands."

Christian reader, what are you doing for the Lord in this promising field of happy service? You profess to love him. If your profession be truthful, will it not lead you to work for him? You cannot say you can do nothing. Every one can do something; and God can use the weakest things to accomplish the most glorious results. A tract handed to a neighbour may be, through God's grace, a richer gift to him than the wealth of the world. Work, then, wherever and whenever you can, and pray for a blessing on every messenger of glad tidings that you scatter.

ON THE LOOK-OUT.

WHAT a beautiful picture we have given of the early church, when "all that believed were together, and had all things common." The spirit of love which united these early disciples in such intimate fellowship, should dwell in the hearts of Christians to-day. Within the church and out of it, the world is full of aching hearts—lonely, weary, they are almost crushed beneath their heavy burdens.

Stop these despondent ones. Inquire with loving solicitude, why the way in which their feet tread is dark and dreary. There is one who has begun to feel the loneliness and want of a life without a Saviour; the burden of guilt rests heavy. How blessed to point the repenting soul to the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world.

Another, from whose eyes the light of hope has gone out, might tell a sad story of wanderings, of returning penitence, of rude repulsion from all sympathy, until, in utter hopelessness, they stagger beneath their burdens.

If we were on the look-out along the highways of life, we should meet very many whom we could greatly comfort by some act of loving thoughtfulness.

A smile, a cheering word, a warm pressure of the hand, a prayer—how they often help. Little deeds of kindness on our part, they may send light and joy into the heart, that shall never go out.

Are you anxious to help others? Go, then, and seek out those who are not so favourably situated as yourself. You will find it a blessed work. We pity those who are trying to get to heaven alone; that are willing to see others pressed down by the burdens of grief and sin, without extending a helping hand.—*Sanford.*

Facts and Scraps.

COAL.—What becomes of the coal? is the uppermost question now. The following will partly answer this question. Last year the export of coal from the United Kingdom has been as follows:—13,211,261 tons, of the value of £10,443,920. It is instructive to observe the difference in price in the first and last two months of 1872. In January, 1872, we exported 842,328 tons of coal, of the declared value of £469,628; and in February, 915,282 tons, of the value of £518,456. But in November, 1872, we exported 1,092,087 tons, of the value of £1,111,740; and in December, 830,370 tons (nearly the same quantity as in January) of the value of £822,004. The export of coal in the year 1872 included no less than 2,191,346 tons to France, and 2,112,128 tons to Germany.

DRINK IN THEATRES, &c.—We have often described in these pages the evils incident to permitting alcoholic stimulants to be sold in theatres and music halls. We are glad to find that the Hanley magistrates have concurred in these views, and refused the renewal of the theatre refreshment-room licence, and expressed the belief that the sale of drink at theatres was productive of much mischief. The lessee of the theatre, who made the application, concurred in this view, and said he should be glad to see a return to the time when theatres had no such adjuncts; but he reminded the bench that there were now music halls in the town where drink was sold, and he asked if they intended to put all such places of amusement on the same footing? The mayor said one of the music halls was attached to a public-house, and the licence of the other would be dealt with in due course.

PAUPERISM.—Last month the total number of paupers in the metropolitan district was 119,053, of whom 37,737 were in workhouses, and 81,316 received outdoor relief. This was a decrease of 1,097 compared with the corresponding week in last year, but compared with 1871 and 1870 the above figures show a decrease of 28,675 and 50,310 respectively.

IDIOTS IN ENGLAND.—At a meeting held in Leeds in furtherance of the objects of the Royal Albert Asylum for Idiots, the Archbishop of York, who presided, stated that there are 50,000 idiots in the United Kingdom, of whom 30 per cent. are enabled to become useful members of society, and the remainder may be materially benefited.

PUTRID MEAT.—Bad meat is such a fertile source of disease amongst the poor that we are glad to find the City authorities are doing their best to imprison in extreme cases, and not merely fine the criminal graziers. Thus two cases in which men were charged with sending putrid meat to the London market were disposed of at the Guildhall police-court last month. In one of these a horse and pig dealer, of Branfield, in Sussex, was fined £20. In the other, a resident of Halesworth was sent to prison for a month with hard labour.

Notices of Meetings.

RICHMOND STREET, MAIDA HILL.

THE friends and supporters of the above valuable institution lately assembled at the schoolroom, this being the 21st annual meeting. Gurney Hoare, Esq., occupied the chair.

Previously to the commencement the boys of the Home sang a number of well-chosen selections in a way that did credit to themselves and those who trained them. The Rev. C. Campe opened the proceedings with prayer, and the Secretary's report was then read by H. S. Perrin, Esq. It said that the Home was designed for the orphan, the destitute, and the outcast. The question of finance was rather sadly prominent—sadly, because there appears to be a balance of £48 5s. 5d. due to the treasurer on the last year's account, and in addition to this there is still £400 due to C. P. Stewart, Esq., lent to the Institution when it was necessary to effect some alterations in the premises. Doubtless the overdrawn account of the Institution has been occasioned by the great rise in price of every commodity. The resignation of Mr. J. S. Wyon as the honorary secretary was much deplored, but the services of Mr. Perrin were secured in his place. With regard to the Ragged School the report was gratifying. It stated that the attendance, progress, and good conduct of the children had been very encouraging. Still, there was the old complaint that more voluntary teachers are wanted, and it is worth noting that the committee do not ask that attendance should be given every Sunday evening, but will be satisfied if it can be given once a month, for by such means the hands of the superintendent would be strengthened. A large amount of business had been done in printing and paper-bag making at the Home, an amount of £309 0s. 10½d. from the proceeds being available towards the maintenance of the boys. There was a hopeful conclusion, and a tribute to the worth and diligence of Mr. Amor, the master and superintendent, which the boys at once took up with a hearty cheer.

SOMERS TOWN.

The first annual meeting of the Working Men's Club and Costermongers' Christian Mission was held at the Institute, Middlesex Street, Somers Town. The large room of the Institute was crowded with an appreciative audience, consisting entirely of costermongers, their wives and friends. The Rev. J. Oswald Dykes, M.A., occupied the chair.

Mr. McGougan, the secretary, and originator of the club, then gave his report, in which he announced that 155 members had joined during the year, and that although many had removed, the greater portion continued their subscription of 2d. a week. In the past year 15 members had obtained barrows of their own, at from £3 to £3 5s. each, and they were now able to supply them at the rate of one each month. Unfortunately the educational department was not so well attended as he could wish. The secretary also alluded to the vexed Sunday question, and stated he had been present on the previous day at the meeting of the Vestry of St. Pancras, and that a motion to close all Sunday trading in Chapel Street at half-past ten, instead of one o'clock, in the forenoon, was carried by 25 votes against 16.

After addresses by Mr. Woffendale, the missionary of the district, and Mr. Alfred Davis, the secretary of the Barrow Club, Mr. Catlin, of the Cow Cross Mission, delivered a lecture entitled "Twice Round the Clock; or, Day and Night Scenes in the Great Metropolis."

Papers, Original and Selected.

FUTURE GRANTS TO RAGGED SCHOOLS.

In the circular issued by the Committee of the Ragged School Union at the close of last year, the whole work of the London Ragged Schools was reviewed. From the magnitude of the operations, and the largeness of the population reached—estimated as at least 50,000—it was felt that no branch of the work could be justifiably abandoned; more especially as no existing organisation was prepared, even if able, to take our place.

Amongst other agencies, much attention was given to the number and condition of the affiliated Day and Night Schools. The personal inquiries of the two School Agents in October and November last showed that, notwithstanding the number of *Day* Schools transferred to the School Board, 80 institutions conducted Day Schools, and about the same number Night Schools. To these secular schools the annual grants given last year for teachers or monitors amounted to £1,834.

Many of our Day Schools were, we are glad to intimate, reported by H. M.'s Inspectors as "efficient," both as regards building and instruction, and hence they count in the educational statistics of their district. It is true that only a few of our paid teachers hold certificates, but that fact does not prevent the recognition of their school if it has passed as efficient in instruction and building. Thus, Sir F. R. Sandford, the Secretary of the Educational Department of the Privy Council, wrote, April 29th ult., to the Cambridge Board of Education as follows:—"My Lords have nowhere laid down as a rule, or required, that a school should be rated as 'inefficient' because a master is uncertificated. No schools can receive grants unless the teacher is certificated,—but many hundreds of schools have passed as 'efficient' though held by uncertificated teachers."

Under the impression that their Day Schools were still needed, many local committees determined to carry them on as long as possible. This decision is strengthened by the fact that the London School Board regards the efficient Day Schools as valuable

auxiliaries, and hence has directed its Visitors to visit them; and to assist the teachers by visiting the homes of absentees, and by sending suitable recruits. It is thus seen that our Day Schools do not act in antagonism to the School Board, but rather materially help it, by embracing sections of the population which it finds difficult to reach.

On their survey of the London Ragged Schools, the Committee of the central Society stated that "it must not be forgotten that the migratory and general lawless character of the very lowest of the population will, for a time at least, make the work of elementary education on their behalf by the School Board of London one of no small difficulty. It is imperative, therefore, that the Committee should still continue this necessary but at the same time onerous and expensive portion of their operations *by giving increased aid to the managers of the various Day and Evening Schools* with whom they are still likely to be identified, nor will they relax any efforts in developing that Evangelical Gospel teaching so successful in the past, and so urgently necessary for the future. They propose still further to extend and support the various operations with which the public have long been familiar, such as Ragged Sunday Schools, Penny Banks, Bands of Hope, Clothing Clubs, Mothers' Meetings, Evening Classes, &c., and to encourage and aid such other efforts as are likely to promote the social, moral, and spiritual well-being of the still neglected masses of the population, including Infant Nurseries, Labourers' Clubs, Ragged Churches and Children's Services, Medical and Gospel Missions, Parents' Lectures, &c., and to continue the Annual Prizes for Good Conduct so long given to boys and girls remaining in their situations for twelve months and upwards with satisfaction to their employers."

Having thus unanimously agreed as to the propriety, not only of continuing, but of increasing that pecuniary help so long given to the affiliated Ragged Schools, the Committee had to consider those *details* upon which the success of any scheme mainly depends. After mature consideration, the following revised Scale of Annual Grants to Day and Night Schools was agreed to, namely:—

"Day Schools.

A Day School, with an average attendance of not less than 60 scholars meeting morning and afternoon, to be eligible for an

annual grant in aid of teachers' salaries at the following rates, viz. :—

A Master . . .	£15 per year
A Mistress . .	12 „

provided that such grants are not more than a third of the salary paid to each teacher; but should one-third be a less proportion than the grant at present voted, such grants may be continued at the option of this Committee.

Should the school have an average attendance of 100 or more children, an assistant teacher will be eligible for a grant in aid of salary, viz. :—

A Male . .	£7 10s. per year
A Female . .	5 0s. „

provided that such grants are not more than half of the salary paid to each assistant.

In the event of paid monitors being employed instead of assistant teachers, the following scale shall regulate the payment made by the Committee of this Society, viz. :—

School of	60 to 100 children	. 2	Monitors,	4s. weekly
„	100 to 150 do.	. 4	„	8s. „
„	150 upwards	. 6	„	12s. „

That a moiety of such or any smaller payments be granted by this Committee, but only on condition that the monitors receive from the principal teachers daily training and teaching to fit them for continued efficiency in their duties, and that their work be well reported on by the School Agents each half-year.

The foregoing grant to be voted on the condition that the school is supplied with suitable material to the satisfaction of the School Agents.

Evening Schools.

In aid of Salaries to Teachers.—The following are the amounts recommended to be made by local committees to teachers conducting Week Evening Schools :—

For 1 evening per week,	Master .	£6	Mistress .	£5	per year
2 „	„ .	12	„ .	10	„
3 „	„ .	18	„ .	15	„
4 „	„ .	24	„ .	20	„

Where such or any smaller payments are made by local committees, a moiety of the amount so paid be contributed by the Committee of this Society. Should the evening teacher be also the teacher of the Day School, the aid given by this Committee shall be limited to three evenings per week."

Nor will pecuniary aid, when needed, be withheld from those social and missionary operations—above 900 in number—which form so prominent a feature in the London Ragged Schools. In fact, from the very outset, whenever a special grant in liquidation of debt was requested by the local committees, the *whole* work of the school—as well social and evangelistic as educational—was always considered, and the grant given was based on the total of the general work. These special grants during the past five years amounted to £4,478—£441 of that sum being voted last year. Such special grants the Committee are not only prepared to continue, but to materially increase when required by local exigencies, or by the expense entailed by new operations.

The Committee of the Ragged School Union states, as respects

"SUNDAY SCHOOLS,

that they are deeply impressed with the necessity which exists for extending the number of *Sunday Schools, and especially Sunday-night Schools*, and earnestly urges upon the attention of the committees generally the duty of providing accommodation, and otherwise affording facilities for the religious instruction of poor and neglected children abounding in this metropolis.

In order to encourage the promotion of new schools, and to maintain in efficiency those already in existence, this Committee will be prepared to make *Special Grants* for the formation and fitting up of new schools in poor districts; and, further, when schools are conducted with satisfaction to the School Agents, and are well lighted and ventilated, clean, warm, and otherwise fitted to attract the class of children for which Ragged Schools were primarily intended, this Committee will be prepared to make grants for school materials, and also to give special grants towards the payment of rent and other necessary expenses, provided that the funds derived from local sources are insufficient to meet them, and that a financial statement accompany the application."

The Committee also thus refer to the future aid to be given to

"AUXILIARY EFFORTS.

Among the various efforts promoted and fostered by Ragged Schools for the encouragement of industrious and prudent habits, are—Industrial Classes, Infant Nurseries, Ragged Churches, and Mission Services, Children's Services, Mothers' Meetings, Provident and Clothing Clubs, Penny Readings and Lectures, Bands of Hope and Sunday Rest Associations, and other kindred schemes which it is most desirable to encourage and extend.'

With this view the Committee will, when the local funds are insufficient to meet the expenses attending such efforts, and where they are carried on in conjunction with Day or Evening Schools in union with this Society, give such special aid as the circumstances may seem to them to warrant.

The Committee reserve to themselves the right of making or withholding any grants; all grants being made and continued at their pleasure."

Of course, the amount of future aid to Ragged Schools depends upon the pecuniary support given to the central Society by the public, who in this respect may be said to hold the keys of the position. That such aid will be withheld, especially by that section of our supporters who most value our philanthropic or missionary labours, we do not for one moment suppose, for rarely have adequate funds been wanting to advance our movement. We then in faith commit our beloved schools to Him who first suggested the work and anointed the labourers, and Who has made the work such a success that even gainsayers have been compelled to exclaim, "What hath God wrought!"

HALF FOR JOHNNY.

BY REV. P. STRYKER, D.D.

A MINISTER or teacher should have large pockets, a big heart, and an eye always open to see the children. And, indeed, it would be a happy circumstance if all good people were similarly furnished. A little leaf from my experience, perhaps, will illustrate and enforce this simple truth.

A few days since, in concluding a pastoral call on one of my well-to-do families, I was requested to take home with me a few apples. They were

beauties—large, mellow, shining. At once the ample pockets of my overcoat flew open, and the Spitzenbergs—some half a dozen in number—jumped in. In my lengthy perambulations in the outskirts of our city, that afternoon, I ate one of these apples, and enjoyed it very much; but the disposition I made of the others gave me far greater pleasure, as you will presently see.

Here I come to the gate of Widow Wilkins. Poor woman! some four years ago her husband, a thrifty mechanic, died, and left her in loneliness and poverty, to care for a large family of little children. She is sober and industrious, and trusts in God; and the God of the widow and the Father of the fatherless has not forsaken her. But with all her energy she would hardly be able to furnish her hungry little ones with bread and potatoes, if it was not for the supplies sent in, every now and then, by neighbour Thrifty. As for *apples*, it is a rare thing for Widow Wilkins's children to taste one; so this is my opportunity for lightening my load.

While I am trying to say a few words of good cheer to the mother, the youngest child, a pretty little four-year-old girl, stands by her side. She laughs as I show her one of my rosy-cheeked apples, and is soon eating it. The widow's children are all fond of her, and they want to see the pastor too, and so one by one they enter the room. Two more are soon engaged very happily in putting their teeth into my Spitzenbergs. Presently number four steals in. He is a smart lad, some ten years old, who does the errands. His looks speak well for him. His mother says he is a good boy, and we do not doubt it. His hard work must give him an appetite, and so—"Eddie, here is an apple for you."

"Thank you," was his reply. And then thrusting his hand in his pocket, he brought out his knife, and dividing his apple in two equal parts, he offered one to his mother. How thoughtful as well as generous! Poverty often makes even children considerate. The eye of Widow Wilkins twinkled with pride as well as love. I think she had a mind to give her manly boy a kiss and a hug, but the minister was by; and so she said to Eddie, in a low voice, "Thank you, my dear, but you may keep it for Johnny."

Half for Johnny! How much that suggested to me! Perhaps she was hungry herself; but Johnny, the oldest boy, would soon come home from school, where he has stopped to consult his teacher about a difficult lesson. He must have a taste—her child before herself. Again my hand went down into the big pocket, and drew out the *last* Spitzenberg. How I wished I had not eaten one myself, and then I could have provided each of the family with an apple. But, at any rate, Johnny shall have a whole one, and then the widow can have the half which Eddie offers her, or she can feast herself, as I did, on the happiness and generosity of her children.

Dear reader, does not this simple story of humble everyday life suggest to you many valuable lessons? It certainly does; but lest you may, in your haste, fail to study them out, let us mention a few briefly.

Have large pockets, that you may be prepared for a good opportunity. It will come, and perhaps when you least expect it.

With a grateful heart take all the apples and other good things presented to you—*provided you can carry them.* This last clause I put in because I remember a favourite old clergyman whose carriage was once loaded down with pumpkins, when pumpkins were very cheap, and the travelling very bad, and who was obliged, in mercy to his horse, to stop and throw out part of his donation by the wayside.

Let your motto be, "*Half for Johnny.*" There are a great many Johnnys in the world, and all I have met with have good appetites. They may not be in a starving condition, and yet feel a decided satisfaction in eating a nice juicy Spitzenberg. Try them and see.

Oh, my friend, if you want to be really happy, learn of Jesus. Trust in him for your salvation; and then, with a heart within you, which shall be Christ's heart, and the Holy Spirit dwelling in that heart as a teacher, you will know from sweet, daily experiment, "*it is more blessed to give than to receive.*" Some people think they must do great things, and give splendid presents, if they do, or give anything. Such people, too, are very apt to show their generosity to those who do not need it, and cannot be supposed to be very grateful. Jesus evinced his benevolence to the young, the poor, the sick, the sorrowing. He put his hand in blessing on the heads of little children. He fed the hungry. He wiped away the sorrowing tear. He did *little things*, and yet they were *great* with mercy, and he was doing them all the while. His very shadow was esteemed a blessing, and a word from his lips often gave life to the dead and joy to the living.

Be like Him! Remember, a very little act of kindness, a trifling gift, a gentle word, a loving smile, may afford much happiness. If done in the proper spirit, it will please and honour the Saviour, who has said, a cup of cold water given in his name shall not go unrewarded. The reward you will receive at once in the gratitude of the beneficiary, and in the developed love of your own heart.

GOSPORT RAGGED SCHOOL AND BETHEL.

THIS school, which was begun twenty years ago, is planted in South Street, Gosport, and is perfectly unsectarian, though based upon Scriptural principles. It is supported by Christians of various sections of the Church, both in this country and in other parts of the world.

The Boys' Daily Ragged School, which was originated in May, 1853, continues to be a blessing to very many poor boys, who are daily instructed in the Bible, also in reading, writing, and arithmetic. The average daily attendance of poor boys is about 70, with over 130 who come more or less to the school. Notwithstanding all the efforts that are now put forth in this town, there are yet to be found many poor boys who get a hard living by picking up coal, pilfering, loitering about the railings of the barracks to run errands for the soldiers, &c., and are encouraged by unhappy parents. Thus they are still untaught and hardened in sin; yet many of these poor children are being gathered in, who, were it not for this school, would go to none.

The school alluded to is not only opened as a Daily Ragged School, but is used on the Sunday Evening for collecting the poor children together to hold a Children's Service. Thus many are drawn in to hear of the love of God in giving Jesus to die for them, who otherwise would be running about the streets indulging in sin.

The Girls' Free Day and Sunday School and Bethel are combined for religious services to merchant seamen and the poor. In this building many poor girls are being instructed in reading the Bible, also in arithmetic, plain needlework, &c. The average daily attendance being 80, with nearly 150 attending from time to time.

The Sunday School is going on satisfactorily, with a large attendance, the two buildings hardly proving large enough for comfort in teaching so many in their separate classes.

This building is also used for religious meetings, at which many of the parents of the children have been brought in to hear the Word of God preached in all truth and simplicity, with many others, consisting of seamen, soldiers, and the poor of the surrounding neighbourhood. Many of these have been drawn in first to partake of a good free tea, which are given for the last few years, during the winter months, once a week, and afterwards the gospel has been faithfully preached. Thus many now come regularly that never went anywhere before to hear the Word of God, and we have encouraging facts to prove that we are not labouring in vain.

A Band of Hope is also held fortnightly, and several children are total abstainers.

With the work on shore there is now connected a Floating Bethel. In January, 1871, finding that Mr. Nicholson had a vessel just suited to the purpose, Mr. Henry Cook, the founder and superintendent, asked him if he would sell her on easy terms. The bargain being struck, he took to the vessel, the first instalment to be paid down on launching, after the repairs. This was met; all the rest was to be paid in twelve months, which has been done.

As regards the working of this vessel, a memorial for a grant of mooring, to the Admiralty, was drawn up, signed by many of the principal merchants of Portsmouth and Gosport, supported by the Commander-in-Chief, Admiral Sir James Hope, G.C.B., and the Marquis of Cholmondeley, a vice-president of the Ragged School Union. This being granted, the vessel was moored at Portsmouth. Religious meetings have been held for seamen, and the vessel has often been got under way for a cruise to the light ships, the Isle of Wight, and various places during the summer, and meetings held off Warsash, Bembridge, Seaview, &c., to which many have come off and have enjoyed some happy gatherings.

Connected with this school there is a Mission Boat, now in use for many years, in which to sail or row to the shipping in and out of the harbour, and distribute English and Foreign Bibles, good books and tracts, for which the seamen are always grateful. Some meetings have occasionally been held in their cabins, and the gospel faithfully preached. Bibles, New Testaments, books and tracts in English and foreign languages, have been circulated in large numbers; several American ships during the year, whose crews

consist of many countries, viz., English, Irish, South America, Swedes, German, Italian, Spanish, Dutch, as well as black and coloured men, have gratefully received such as we had to give; and who can tell the result? Among other foreign ships and vessels, viz., Russian, Prussian, Swedes, Danes, Italian, Spanish, French, &c., the Word of God has been freely distributed to their respective crews.

A House, Reading Room, and Mission Hall in Stoke Road, is also in free use for poor destitute boys, soldiers, sailors, and others. Here also the gospel is proclaimed twice on the Lord's day and on the week evenings. Christian soldiers and evangelists from various places take the meetings.

EPSOM RACES BY MOONLIGHT.

FOR some years past a few Christian men have regularly attended the Epsom races, not of course to add to the sins of that festival of English blackguardism, but to distribute tracts and preach the gospel. These races not only attract the roughs of all ranks, high and low, but also many of our social waifs and strays. Amongst these are a large number of children, most with their parents, but not a few boys and girls without any friends to protect them. Their ostensible mission is to sell fuzees, matches, &c., but their real work is begging, if not thieving. These encamp on the Downs all night—some even in the *ditches*, men and women, boys and girls, all huddling together, more like swine than human beings. Two of the preachers—after preaching all day—resolved to visit these poor outcasts by moonlight, who give this painful sketch of a scene which cries shame on the boasted civilisation of the 19th century.

"The night was cold, a piercing north-east wind prevailing, and yet there lay under the hedges a number of sleeping men and lads. They were in all positions, heads down and heads up: caps on and bareheaded: heavy as logs and restless as gnats. Some lay close, others in heaps, arms and legs intertwined. Under the stands on the course they slept in scores—men, women, girls, boys, and babies all huddled together. And there were hundreds of them—poor, haggard, ragged, profane, homeless wretches of the lowest class.

Hundreds of people seemed to have spent the night in the drinking booths. As the explorers wended their way along the hill they heard volleys of frightful oaths in a tent. Walking quietly along its side they came to a little hole in the canvas, and peered through at the repulsive scene within. A number of low, brutal men—all of them drunk—were standing in the middle of the tent 'swearing at large.' No doubt they knew what had caused the volcano of oaths and blasphemy to belch forth, but the listeners could not tell. It was too horrible to bear long, so the brethren silently passed on.

What hordes of homeless people there must be in England! The wandering gipsies dwell in tents and vans, but there are tens of thousands who have *no home at all*. The brethren found some of these behind a hedge. Men and women were there bending over a wood fire in the ditch. Young

lads and girls were drinking brown tea out of saucers, and a mother was nursing a young babe who had probably been born in the open air! And a few yards off were persons of both sexes performing every operation of the toilet in the bright light of the morning sun.

On the evening of the Derby, when the town was full of excited people; when coloured minstrels were singing; when Punch and Judy were screaming; and when strong drink was doing its fell work, some brethren began an open-air service at the Clock Tower. Soon the enemy came like wild bulls. They swore, hooted, jeered, rushed through the preachers, roared with rage, and fulminated most awful curses. On went the preaching, singing, and prayer for awhile, and then came showers of stones, and bags of flour, which fell on the little band. How 'respectable tradesmen' came to sell the bags of flour to the drunken betting men for such a purpose, and how, after the first lot had been thrown at the preachers, making some of them as white as millers, they sold a second supply, they can best explain. A two-pound bag of flour struck good Walter Penrose on the right eye, and, bursting there, hurt him much, and left him in pain for days; but he bore it well, and showed himself both brave and meek. Mr. Heath, Mr. Browne, Mr. Carter, Mr. Shaw, and others, all had their share of hustling, flour, and curses; but the ground was held to the last by two of the friends.

A betting man who made a great noise was suddenly confronted by one of the brethren, who said:—

'I challenge you to do one thing.'

'What is that?'

'I challenge you to get up there and *tell us how your companions die.*'

He turned pale, and refused; but one of his own party exclaimed:—

'Why, some of them die in ditches.'

'Ah!' retorted the preacher, 'Christian men do not die in ditches.'

In a day when the Church shows so little of the martyr's spirit, it is pleasing to find that the race of the prophets is not extinct; and that there are still found men who, like Jeremiah (vii. 2), fear not to stand and denounce the enemy at his very gates. That such true Christian heroism will conquer in this terrible battle who can doubt? For, even amid this camp of moral lepers, there are those to whom the gospel of the grace of God is as life from the dead."

EDINBURGH INDUSTRIAL BRIGADE.

TOWARDS the close of 1867 some gentlemen, deeply impressed with the conviction that something ought to be done to help outcast lads, met for the purpose of consulting each other as to what plan should be adopted. The result was the formation of the Industrial Brigade.

The idea which originated this Brigade is a very simple one, viz., that these poor boys, being wholly destitute, were upon the very brink of joining the criminal classes, but for the help afforded by this Association. A Home is provided, under the charge of a superintendent and matron, where each

boy can get food, clothing, lodging, and education—in short, a poor boys' club, with plain and wholesome food. Situations are procured for them at some trade or other *out* of the Home. Each boy is allowed to remain in the Home until, through his own industry, he can earn a sufficient amount of wages to provide for himself honestly and decently,—the double object being thus gained, of making the boy pay for his own reformation, and in the shortest possible time merging him into the ranks of honest workers. The economy of the scheme is one of its greatest recommendations, as will be seen when we mention the fact that the trifling supplement of £4 per annum to the boys' earnings pays the entire cost. The charge to the boys for the whole privileges of the Institution is 3*s.* 6*d.* a week, the surplus of their wages being placed to their credit in a savings bank.

To get the boys together at starting, a supper was announced. About sixty responded to the call, in every stage of filth and destitution. It was some time before the unruly mass was sufficiently in order to proceed with the serious business of "*feeding*." At last all interruptions were stopped, including amateur vocal performances, ranging from "There is a happy land" to "What jolly dogs are we." The food soon disappeared, and the promoters found it was no slight task which they had undertaken. Many of the boys had not slept in a bed for years, passing the nights on stair-heads, in dung boats and carts, or in railway trucks under the tarpaulins, and most had nowhere to go but the streets.

The worst cases were provided for at the Night Refuge at once, where they had a good scrubbing in the bath. Some amusing scenes here occurred, boys not knowing each other. When clean, one boy exclaimed, "Ay, sirs, I never thoch I could get sich a colour." Whilst in the bath, their old clothes were burned, and clean clothing provided for them. A small house had been rented, and was not long in being filled; so that within a week or two the inmates had to remove to larger premises, where some thirty boys were accommodated. The boys so rapidly improved in health and appearance, that they were no longer recognised as the same dirty, restless, daring spirits who, scarcely a year before, had accepted the invitation to the supper. The change upon the streets was most marked, *Ragged-dom* having almost entirely disappeared. The boys were apprenticed to *regular trades* or employments of every conceivable kind.

Up to 1868 the gentlemen who had the management were timid of further extension; but, urged by one of the most enthusiastic of the Directors, and the success of the movement having been so gratifying, and the endeavour to reclaim the boys so visibly blessed, it was resolved to lay aside the national characteristic of caution, and at once to throw open the doors to all applicants. Accordingly, larger premises were taken in Grove Street, and within a very short time tenanted by upwards of EIGHTY poor boys. This sudden extension might naturally be supposed to have entailed a proportionate expansion of labour in taming such a crowd of young, wild, restless, spirits, but the result astonished the promoters themselves. The former inmates ranged themselves on the side of order, and by a little management there was less trouble experienced in getting the Home into good order than even at the outset.

A few months ago a new element was added to the Institution as a means of reclaiming the boys. Singing and band masters were engaged, and a harmonium and drums and fifes presented to the boys. The effects were wondrous. Within a few weeks a dozen or more boys could actually play one or two simple airs in a most creditable manner, while nearly the whole could join in part-singing. The drummers and fifers have by their own exertions—self-taught, or nearly so—earned for themselves the honourable distinction of being permitted to play in one of the principal promenades of Edinburgh, by special permission of the Lord Provost.

The boys are not compelled to attend school more than three nights in the week, though as an inducement to secure their attendance every night in the week, each boy who comes regularly night after night, for the whole week, receives a reward of a penny.

The number of lads in the Home at present is 81. Their ages range from 14 up to 20. The earnings of the boys for the four years since the institution of the Home have been £1,413 8s. 3d.

The whole number of lads assisted by the Institution since 1867 has been 363.

On Lord"s day classes are held at 9.30 A.M. Ladies and gentlemen undertake the work of teaching these classes. These Sabbath morning talks no doubt will be remembered by many a lad in after days. A service is also held at 2 P.M., and another in the evening at 7.30. The boys are left free to attend the afternoon service or remain away just as they choose; only those who fail to return to the Home by two o'clock forfeit their dinner.

Upwards of a hundred boys since the formation of the Association have been assisted by it, are known to be doing well, and are now fast becoming honourable citizens, whilst a short time ago they were but a nuisance and an eyesore. Thus they have, instead of preying upon the industry of others, become wealth-producers.

SCHOOL AGENT'S WORK.—No. I.

WEST AND SOUTH.

FROM Mr. Hytche's Nineteenth Annual Report we make the following extracts, as indicating the state of the Western and Southern Ragged Schools.

In the West and South there are SEVENTY INSTITUTIONS. Of these, thirty-seven are in the Southern Division.

The number of my visits was necessarily reduced last year, through the serious and prolonged illness of the secretary, and the office duties which devolved on me. The following is the list of such

VISITS.

Sunday Schools, 73; Day Schools, 145; Night Schools, 90; Conferences, 66; Local Committees, 2; Public Meetings, 15; Parents' Meetings, 14. Total, 405.

Notwithstanding the uncertainty of the future of Ragged Schools, it is satisfactory to intimate that the zeal of the local workers has not relaxed. It is true that little has been done to increase secular instruction, but social

and missionary operations have been much extended. Some of these sprang out of the suggestions made by your Agent in 1871, and hence commenced in the first month of last year. The following is a list of last year's EXTENSIONS, which amounted to thirty-eight, namely :—4 Sunday Schools, 2 Night Schools, 4 Girls' Industrial Classes, 4 Penny Banks, 3 Clothing Clubs, 3 Bands of Hope, 3 Singing Classes, 6 Ragged Churches, and 7 Children's Churches.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS

are conducted by sixty-one institutions. In addition, ordinary Sunday Schools are conducted in three buildings.

Of these Sunday Schools sixteen meet in the morning, when the attendance is 740. Forty-three meet in the afternoon, and are attended by 4,713. The thirty-nine Evening Schools are attended by 5,935. The united attendance of afternoon and evening scholars is 10,648.

Last year *Portland Town* Sunday School was reorganised, when the attendance doubled. The schools in Richmond Street and Manchester Buildings were amalgamated, and removed to larger premises in *Burdett Street*, Walworth. As one result, the Sunday night has risen from 130 to 280. The school in Davies' Mews was also united to that in *Gray's Yard*, the entire missionary and social work devolving on the former school. *Portobello Road* Sunday School was also reorganised, and the attendance has doubled.

The *Teachers* enrolled are 922. But, as the average attendance is only 679, it appears that above one quarter are invariably absent. This is partly due to the system of relays, teachers attending on alternate Sundays, sometimes even once only in the month. Such teachers have rarely any command over their classes, and any personal tie is out of the question. But superintendents are only too glad to avail themselves of this aid, as too many classes would be teacherless.

Another evil it is right to mention here, as your Agent has often spoken to superintendents on the subject—namely, the inordinate length of many opening prayers. Often they have occupied above ten minutes, and there was neither attention nor reverence on the part of the scholars; and, what was still worse, these prayers were rambling, and bore scarcely any relation to the scholar's needs, being in fact more fitted for a church than a school.

One more prominent mistake may be referred to—namely, the increasing tendency of teachers—especially young converts—to *preach* rather than *teach*. On one occasion, for example, the lesson occupied one hour, without any break in the shape of a question on the part of the teachers. As one result, as the scholars had nothing to do but to listen, they became listless and indifferent.

With these exceptions, the bulk of Sunday Schools can vie with ordinary Sunday Schools both for vigour and discipline. In these cases, in addition to an earnest superintendent, this satisfactory aspect is due to the teachers having something to say, and knowing *how* to say it. It is here that a prepared lesson is of inestimable value; for being himself full of matter, the teacher cannot fail to interest his class.

Some Sunday Schools—for example, Brook Street and Lansdown Place—devote the fifth Sunday evening in each quarter to a special religious service. Four or five addresses are given by the best speakers, which are followed by revival hymns, and brief but pointed prayers. This, in some cases, has been a turning-point in the lives of some of the worst boys in the school. As it serves to deepen, if not to arouse religious impressions, I think such a service might be beneficially adopted in every Sunday Night School.

In twenty-one Sunday Schools there are SENIOR BIBLE CLASSES. The membership exceeds 400. They are usually so popular that absence is the exception rather than the rule. The mode of conducting them varies, but most announce the subject for next Sunday at the close of teaching; the scholars being encouraged to search for parallel passages during the week. By this means not only is the interest of the scholars kept up, but all contribute their share to the general profit.

It only remains to refer to the TEACHERS' PRAYER MEETINGS. Of these there are fifty, attended by 1,051, 600 of whom are scholars. The conduct of the latter—usually elder scholars—is most devout.

DAY SCHOOLS

were conducted up to Christmas by 36 institutions. But, as one of these was transferred at the commencement of 1873 to the School Board, the present number of Free Day Schools is 35. Board Day Schools are now conducted in 12 buildings; and cheap Day Schools are conducted in 9 other buildings. It thus appears that Day Schools are held in 56 buildings.

The united attendance of scholars was, up to Christmas, 5,000. These were taught by 72 teachers and 178 monitors. These monitors, with the exception of Marigold Place, are selected from the most promising scholars in the Day Schools; and several former monitors are now regular paid teachers.

As there has been some discussion respecting the social status of the scholars in our Day Schools, it is but just to the local committees to intimate that they take every precaution to keep their schools to the right class—namely, those whose parents cannot pay any school fee, or those who are too vicious to care for their children. Thus twenty-five Day Schools are regularly visited by ladies for that purpose; and many of these, in addition to this inspection, visit the homes of candidates before they are registered.

There is an intermediate class between the extreme poor and the more respectable working class. Some of these attended Ragged Day Schools because they could not pay the usual school fees; but now that the Board Schools only charge one penny per week their parents have no excuse—and, with the compulsory powers of the School Board—they cannot refuse to attend Day Schools of a higher grade than our Day Schools. This will leave us in charge of that very large residuum which, if reached at all, can only be influenced by gospel doctrine and Christian love. In fact, as migratory as they are vicious, they can only be reached by Ragged Schools.

There is a noticeable improvement in discipline. Once your Agent had to complain of hap-hazard order; for many untrained teachers knew

little of "method," and depended more on chance than on any fixed principles of discipline. But now most teachers know not only the *how*, but the *why*. Hence H.M. Inspectors—even when they declared the standard of attainment too low—almost invariably congratulated the managers on school order, and many expressed their surprise that such intellectually dull scholars should behave so well.

Last year my seven months' office duties prevented the examination of all the Day Schools. But I was able to examine 25 Day Schools. At these examinations, 3,743 were present. Of these, 2,287—all of whom had attained six years—were examined. Of these 303 had a fair knowledge of the Life of Christ. There were 454 good *Readers*, and 390 moderate ones—making 844 who passed. *Writing:* 484 good; 751 moderate: passed, 1,235. Arithmetic: Addition, 1,112; Subtraction, 727; Multiplication, 612; Division, 460; Multiplication Table, 489; Notation, three figures, 735; four figures, 564; Dictation *Spelling*, 843.

Night Schools

are held by thirty-seven institutions. They are divisible into seven Mixed, with 400 scholars; 25 Boys', with 1,108 scholars; and 29 Girls', with 522 scholars. This makes an average attendance of 2,025. They are taught by 39 paid and 47 voluntary teachers.

The class in attendance much varies according to localities or school attractions. Thus, for example, the bulk of scholars belonging to *Exeter Buildings* and Lower Park Road are Irish. *Lancaster Street* is periodically attended by juvenile roughs. *Old Woolwich Road* attracts many mud-larks. Little ragged children who do not attend any Day School, are attracted to *Victoria Place*, Bow. *John Street* and *St. James's* by lads who hope to become Shoeblacks. *Richmond Street* by many rough lads who are casual labourers in Portman Market. *Park Walk* attracts about 50 boys, many of these hawk-boys of the roughest character.

Of the order of most Night Schools there is every reason to report favourably. But too many are subject to much annoyance from ill-disposed boys and girls—the latter the worst of the two—outside. These pelt the scholars as they enter; throw mud at the windows and doors; or shout and drum at the doors: and thus do their utmost to cause the neighbours to denounce the school as a nuisance.

The difficulty is to know how to meet the social and spiritual needs of juvenile roughs who, like these, are a terror to their districts, and who, if not checked, must grow up ruffians, if not felons. Few paid masters are equal to their control, much less their instruction. Some masters, however, show much ability in this respect. Amongst these Clarence Street and East Greenwich are pre-eminent. Rough as are the elements in these schools, no school could possibly have more life combined with greater order. What is required is a large staff of volunteers, who, in addition to Christian kindness and tact, are of such a social standing as to be able to give them a helping hand when required. This is eminently the case with Park Walk and Richmond Street Schools; and as a result, with a large attendance of these "outsiders," these schools are models of order. Could, then, some

hundred persons—especially those young converts who now seem to prefer preaching to teaching—be induced to give their services two or three nights a week, these classes might be attracted, and thus those scenes of juvenile ruffianism which disgrace the Borough and Lisson Grove would cease.

As one means of attracting scholars a printed notice might be issued prior to the winter session. This is done by Clarence Street and Lower Park Road with signal success. In addition to this, the Ogle Mews master devoted one evening in summer to a canvass for scholars, and with satisfactory results.

Four Night Schools devote part of one evening weekly to singing. This practice has kept together a large number of lads at Price Street. Exeter Buildings, Broadway, and Lyham Road Schools are trying the same experiment. Agent recommends it for general adoption. If a whole evening were not so devoted, the closing half-hour of the last evening in the week might be so appropriated. It would doubtless attract many outsiders.

Industrial Classes.

In my division there are five Boys' Industrial Classes, with ninety-four members. At Richmond Street they are taught printing and paper-bag making. East Greenwich boys are occupied with wood-chopping, and at Walker Street one evening is devoted to carpentry. But these are but few compared with the number of boys in our schools. In all, they might be taught cap-making and clothes-mending, if ladies would devote an hour or two weekly to this task.

Needlework is taught in thirty-one Girls' Schools—the average attendance being 1,426. In addition, many clean the school under the supervision of their teachers; and the ten which give dinners in winter are helped in preparing it by the paid monitors.

It would, I think, add a pleasing feature to local annual meetings if specimens of the scholars' work were exhibited. Prizes, too, might be presented for good and clean workmanship.

Sanitary.

The health of the children showed a marked improvement when compared with that of 1871. Cases of smallpox were rarer, and those of fever still less. As there was, too, a much greater call for unskilled labour than during any year since my appointment, the children as a rule were better fed and better clad.

The following schools were improved last year:—*Pear Street* had a large room which was only used for the Ragged Church. The mixed Sunday School is now held there, as well as the Mothers' Meeting. The *Gray's Yard* School has been rebuilt, and a very large and well-lighted room is devoted to the Sunday School and Ragged Church. *Portland Town* School has been removed from a small, dark room, to a large, lofty, and well-lighted building, capable of containing thrice the number. *Richmond Street* School has been removed from two overcrowded unhealthy parlours to

spacious premises in Burdett Street, Walworth. The Schools in *Giffin Street*, *Broadway*, and *Walker Street* have been thoroughly repaired and painted—the latter by the scholars, under the direction of the master. *King Street* School has been removed from a dark, dingy, stable-like room to the National School in Prospect Place.

Children's dinners were given in ten Day Schools, and a supper to the boys in one Night School last year. The six in the west dined 670, and the five in the south 870 scholars. In almost every case the elder girls aided the teacher in preparing this meal. The cost was partly defrayed at the expense of the "Destitute Children's Dinner Society."

Banks and Clothing Clubs.

One or the other, and in many cases both, of these useful branches of our work are connected with 47 institutions. Of these, the Penny Banks are 35, and the Clothing Clubs 21. There are also 3 Boot Clubs, with 90 members. The depositors in Banks were 13,780; and the members of Clothing Clubs, 1,374.

Seven Banks, in which £4,476 were deposited last year, may be regarded as Costermongers' Banks—the members of which often put in £1 one week and take it out the next. Thus the Robert Street Bank, though it received £2,000 in the course of the year, had not one farthing left when it closed at Christmas.

Parents' Meetings

are held by 35 institutions. They may be divided into 23 Ragged Churches, with 1,265 attendants; 21 Mothers' Meetings with 900 members; and 5 Fathers' Clubs or Meetings with 532 members. Most of the Mothers' Meetings admit others besides those whose children attend the schools. But, as the bulk of the attendants are the mothers of our scholars, the conductors, as well as your Agent in his occasional addresses, always impress on them the duty of sending their children early and regularly to school, and of showing a good example at home.

Bands of Hope,

or juvenile Temperance Societies, are conducted in 15 schools. The regular meetings (which are open to parents) are attended by above 1,500. The aggregate membership is 905.

Libraries

are attached to 29 schools. They have an aggregate of 5,355 volumes—or an average of 188. Of these, 21 were added last year from the grant so liberally placed at your disposal by the Religious Tract Society.

In addition, a few—too few—Sunday Schools have a small library for the sole use of teachers. This I would recommend as a needful adjunct to every Sunday School. Works on Bible facts and Bible geography, Church history and Christian biography, would supply ample materials to the less-instructed teachers. To these might be added the recognised manuals of

method of which the Sunday School Union has such an ample supply. By such means alone can teachers keep abreast of their scholars at a time when secular education will become the rule rather than the exception. If the funds of the Ragged School Union permit, Agent thinks that a small grant of money or books—the latter preferable—would induce many Sunday Schools to form a Teachers' Library.

CHILDREN'S CHURCHES,

or Services for Juvenile Worship, are conducted by 20 schools. The aggregate attendance is 1,235, or an average of 81.

It was before stated that only 16 out of 60 institutions holding Sunday Schools were held in the morning. This springs from two causes—the first, and greatest, being the want of teachers. As regards the scholars, the mothers lie in bed too late on Sunday mornings to get infants ready in time, and elder girls have home duties which cannot be neglected. The only way in which both difficulties can be met is by opening the school at a later hour on Sunday morning—say from 11 till 12. The services of only two teachers are required; whilst children who now ramble and play in the streets during those hours would be attracted by a spirited service suited to their years. In this way nearly all our buildings which are now closed at the brightest period of the day might at once be utilised.

Agent would therefore earnestly advise that this subject be brought under the notice of superintendents at a special meeting convened for that purpose.

CONCLUSION.

Notwithstanding the important changes in many institutions, and the depressing anxiety of others—it is satisfactory to know that the majority of workers have been found equal to the crisis through which Ragged Schools are passing. That School Boards can possibly do our *special* work amongst the destitute or degraded classes no one can believe. Until the millennium, at least, there will always be a vicious or criminal or migratory population, whom nothing but Christianity can possibly tame. But, happily, facts which ofttimes savour of romance, prove that myriads are amenable to gospel influence who otherwise are careless of God and defy the laws of man. By socialising or saving such classes as these we make a contribution to the weal of society such as cannot be exaggerated, and without which this great city would speedily become a "den of thieves!"

Jan.

Editor's Note-Book.

LIBERTY OF PROPHESYING.

THERE is a text in the Bible which is very true—"Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is *liberty*." The brethren of Samson bound him with two new cords, and the Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and the cords were as flax burnt in the fire, and his bands burst from off him. It is impossible to restrain the Spirit-prompting. When the Spirit comes down in all the plenitude of his power, then the man or the woman filled with the Spirit, with a holy boldness and a Christian freedom, will do what the Spirit bids. It may be that the result will not always answer to our conventional notions. When the Spirit of God came down in the first instance, what took place? I read that *every* man began to speak. There were no dumb disciples in those days, no silent saints; and, where the Spirit of God works, no disciple is dumb, and no saint is silent. One begins almost to doubt whether the dumb ones are disciples at all, or those that keep silent, saints. At least, this is certain, that they cannot be filled with the Spirit.—*Rev. C. Williams, Accrington.*

TENDERNESS.

"WE may talk," says Nettleton, "of the best means of doing good, but, after all, the greatest difficulty lies in doing it in a proper spirit. Speaking the truth in love, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves—with the meekness and gentleness of Christ. I have known anxious sinners drop the subject of religion in consequence of a preacher addressing them in an angry tone." "I never was fit," says Payson, "to say a word to a sinner except when I had a broken heart myself, when I was subdued and melted into tenderness, and felt as though I had just received pardon to my own soul, and when my heart was full of tenderness and pity."

SHADOWS WE CAST.

IT is said that, among the high Alps, at certain seasons, the traveller is told to proceed very quietly; for on the steep slopes overhead the snow hangs so evenly balanced, that the sound of a voice or the report of a gun may destroy the equilibrium, and bring down an immense avalanche that will overwhelm everything in ruin in its downward path. And so about our way there may be a soul in the very crisis of its moral history, trembling between life and death, and a mere touch or shadow may determine its destiny.

A young lady, who was deeply impressed with the truth, and was ready, under a conviction of sin, to ask, "What must I do to be saved?" had all her solemn impressions dissipated by the unseemly jesting and laughter of a member of the church by her side, as she passed out of the sanctuary. Her irreverent and worldly spirit cast a repellent shadow on that young lady not far from the Kingdom of God. How important that we should, always and everywhere, walk worthy of our high calling as Christians!

Let us remember that we are always casting the shadow of our real life upon some one—that somebody is following us, as John followed Peter into the sepulchre. Happy if, when all the influences of life flow back and meet us at the judgment, we can lift up clean hands and spotless robes, and say, "I am free from the blood of all men!" Happy then to hear even one soul saying to us out of the great multitude, that, following the shadow of our Christian life and devotion, he found Jesus and heaven.—*Dr. Stork.*

Poet's Corner.

"NOTHING TO DO."

"Nothing to do!" in this world of ours,
Where weeds spring up with the fairest flowers,
Where smiles have only a fitful play,
Where hearts are breaking every day!

"Nothing to do!" thou Christian soul,
Wrapping thee round in thy selfish stole!
Off with the garments of sloth and sin!
Christ, thy Lord, hath a kingdom to win.

"Nothing to do!" There are prayers to lay
On the altar of incense, day by day,
There are foes to meet, within and without,
There is error to conquer, strong and stout.

"Nothing to do!" There are lambs to feed,
The precious hope of the Church's need;
Strength to be borne to the weak and faint,
Vigils to keep with the doubting saint.

"Nothing to do!" when thy Saviour said,
"Follow thou me in the path I tread."
Lord, lend thy help the journey through
Lest, faint, we cry—"*So much* to do!"

Teachers' Column.

SCHOLARS' PRAYER MEETINGS.

We should be glad to know that Scholars' Prayer Meetings were held in connection with most of the Sunday School Classes. In many cases they have been known to be blessed beyond all other means. They bring the children near to Christ, and help them to confess him before each other; and their prayers for themselves and those whom they love are often followed by great results. In our time Prayer Meetings are too much neglected by adult Christians; but those who are in the habit of attending them know how helpful and comforting they are. The children might be trained to take a part in them by holding meetings of their own. They would find not only the refreshing which older Christians find, but also instruction and light in them.

There should be one for each class in which the children are at all of an advanced age. This would be better than united meetings, because the children would feel more at home and less frightened. Each teacher should be present with his own class, and might perhaps say a few earnest words which would stir up the children to greater self-consecration, and might linger in their memories after the meeting was over. The prayers should be very short and to the point. The children should be themselves, and not grown-up people, while they pray; and should be encouraged

to ask for just what they want, and for those things only. The more simple and natural the prayers can be, the better. It will be necessary by all means to keep far away from show and sensationalism in these meetings. At the same time everything should be done that can be, to make them interesting and effective. The hymns should be cheerful and sung to lively tunes. Only a few verses of Scripture should be read. If the teacher speaks he should be careful not to sermonise, but should only say a few plain words from his heart. Above all, both teachers and scholars should rely upon the Holy Spirit alone for his help and teaching.

The meetings should be for the girls as well as the boys. Whatever may be said about women preachers, it will never be denied that girls and women have a right to *pray*. There are times in almost every woman's life when she is called upon to pray before others—it may be with her own children, or by the side of some sick-bed, or with some friend who is in trouble. But if she have never been accustomed to pray aloud she will hesitate and be nervous, and perhaps altogether lose the opportunity. We think, therefore, that it is a good thing for girls to hold Prayer Meetings among themselves.

With regard to the efficacy of prayer we are all agreed. If our children pray for themselves, their parents, their companions, and *for us*, may we not expect great blessings?—*Sunday School Times.*

Children's Gallery.

WAS IT WELL SPENT?

"HERE, boys, is a sovereign for each of you," said Mr. Mitchell to his sons Clarence and Edward, on a bright winter's morning, as they were working in the garden. "I hear that you are at the head of your classes, and this is to express my satisfaction in your progress."

Some days afterwards, as the two boys were in the library, he said to them, "You have not told me how you have each spent your sovereign."

"I have not spent mine yet," said Edward.

"And yours, Clarence?"

"It has all gone, father."

"Indeed! And what have you got to show for it?"

"Nothing, papa."

Clarence bent his head modestly, but without shame; the manliness in his tone convinced his father that all was right.

And now, although Clarence supposed his secret to be safe from all but the eye of his Father in heaven, we, who watched him through all, will relate it in confidence to our readers.

The day on which he received the gift was clear and frosty. It was December, and though the sun shone it had no power upon the icicles which fell from the trees in showers. The air was healthful and exhilarating to the well-clad, but to the poor, unprotected child of want it came too keenly. Clarence hurried on, with skates flung over his shoulder, to join a skating party. His hands were thrust into his coat pockets as he pressed on, when he felt his arm seized from behind.

"Quick, quick! Come quick!" said a little barefooted boy, half frantic with grief. "I believe my mother is dying."

Clarence obeyed impulsively, while the boy, clinging to his coat, dragged him on.

The home, if such it could be called, was not far distant, and the scene which presented itself on his entrance was awful indeed. A woman, surrounded by

three or four children screaming with terror, was lying on a bed, with her clenched hands fixed in an immovable clasp.

"I will go for the doctor," said Clarence, and remembering that he had seen a physician's house on his way, he ran with all speed to summon him. The doctor followed him directly, and at once administered to the poor sufferer. The poor mother had toiled until over-exertion and starvation brought her to her present state. The children were thin, and only half clad. There was no fire on the hearth.

"Are you hungry?" said Clarence.

"Yes, very hungry."

"And cold, too," the boy said, and with a heart bleeding at the sight of such destitution, Clarence hurried to a cook-shop close by. His gold piece was now in requisition. Bread and hot coffee in abundance soon drew the little famished creatures to a corner of the hovel, where they satisfied their hunger and hushed their cries. For a full hour the agonies of the poor mother lasted; then she lay motionless from utter exhaustion, and fell into a profound slumber. A portion of the gold piece still remained, and Clarence tendered the doctor the usual fee. A smile stole over the face of the physician, but there was a tear in his eye, and he looked at him earnestly.

"God bless you, my noble fellow," and he laid his hand upon his head. "Keep your money for other good deeds. I never saw you before, but I think we shall meet again." He shook him warmly by the hand, and disappeared.

Clarence went also, but returned in an hour, bringing with him a pair of new shoes for the eldest boy. This exhausted the money he had with him. While deliberating on what further he could do, the doctor's carriage appeared at the door, and the doctor himself, springing out hastily, took from it packages of clothing, provisions, &c., amply sufficient for their present wants.

"Here," said he to the eldest girl, a child of ten years, "dress your brothers and sisters, and see if your little hands can make the room comfortable."

The child's eyes brightened, for food had strengthened and his cheerful tone encouraged her. She was at once busily employed. He smiled cordially as he discovered Clarence, and said, "I told you we should meet again."

The doctor visited the family daily, until the poor and grateful widow was restored and able to take care of her little ones; then his wife provided employment for her, and she required no further assistance.

Four weeks had passed, when Clarence's father encountered Dr. G—. "Mr. Mitchell, what a noble specimen of humanity you have in that young son of yours! I congratulate you on being his father. Has he told you of his recent encounter with me?"

"Not a word."

"Is it possible? He is a noble fellow."

Then he related to Mr. Mitchell every circumstance of that day connected with Clarence, delicately withholding his own part in the proceedings, which did not, however, remain long a secret. With a full heart overflowing with thankfulness to God for such a son, Mr. Mitchell returned to his home and related all to his wife. As soon as Clarence came in he took him by the hand.

"My son, I know the history of the sovereign."

Clarence looked up in wonder.

"Dr. G— is an old friend, though we do not often meet. He would not rest until he had traced you out, and now, my boy, receive your father's blessing, for I believe our Saviour will say of this act, 'He hath done what he could.'"

ELLA.

RATING OF RAGGED SCHOOLS.

In spite of the combined opposition of both political parties —the "in's" and the "out's"—an Act was passed in 1869, which empowered the parochial authorities to exempt from taxation Ragged and Sunday Schools. Though this Act was only permissive, many parishes, we are glad to intimate, acted in the spirit of the preamble, which declared that "it is *expedient* that they should be exempted from the liability" to parochial taxation. In most cases of appeal the exemption claimed was at once granted.

We are sorry to intimate that Mr. Stansfeld, in his new Rating Bill, proposes to repeal the permissive Act of 1869. How the Government can reconcile this with their professed desire to advance the education of the lower classes, we are at a loss to conceive. But, inconsistent as it is with the spread of moral and religious training, we trust that the Government will be defeated in this attempt to enforce taxation of voluntary labour.

A vigorous opposition to this measure has been organised by the Sunday School Union, the Sunday School Institute, and the Ragged School Union. Petitions, we are glad to say, are flooding the House of Commons on the subject; all against, and not one for, the repeal of an Act which has done much to assist Ragged Schools which were crippled in their resources.

[We are glad to say that this attempt to tax voluntary labour was signally defeated on June 17. For taxing Ragged Schools 27 (!); Against, 239. Majority against, 212.]

Notices of Meetings.

GRAY'S YARD, OXFORD STREET.

On May 22 two meetings were held at Seymour Hall, Seymour Street. The Earl of Shaftesbury presided in the afternoon, and F. Bevan, Esq., in the evening.

The 35th annual report was presented, and the committee reported that the work has presented during the year many encouraging features. The principal difficulties against which the success of the school has to contend are the frequent change of teachers, and the constant migration of children. Although a habit of migration is a principal characteristic of the class which it is the

object of the teachers to instruct and raise, yet it is hoped that if the poor children only remain long enough to attend school for a few Sundays, they may receive an impression of Divine truth which will never be obliterated, but may one day be deepened and confirmed, and the character formed upon the highest of models, the Christian life. The committee desire it to be distinctly understood that the recent action of the School Board in no way affects their work, either to decrease their liabilities or to limit their operations. The report of the Ragged Church was also satisfactory, there having been 58,706 attendances from Nov. 1870 to April 1873. In conclusion, the committee state that for thirty-five years officers and teachers have kept the purpose for which the schools were established steadily in view. The aim has been as lofty and noble as the class which they have sought to benefit is poor, squalid, and ignorant. If it is asked, Where are the results of so much labour, expenditure, and prayer? it may not be possible to point to such a number of cases in which the result of scriptural teaching has been evident as might be expected, but there have been many encouraging facts to cheer and encourage the teachers. It cannot be doubted but that amongst the multitudes of children who have passed through the school, many of whom have emigrated and more removed to other towns, some have carried with them the lessons and impressions of Divine truth received in the school, making them a blessing to society instead of a curse.

ST. GILES'S.

That the sad condition in which homeless or destitute children are placed, and the numerous evils to which they are exposed, call for continual and increased efforts to rescue them from falling into the vagrant and criminal classes; and these refuges and training ships, being pre-eminently calculated to benefit such children, and prepare them for earning their own livelihood, are entitled to the generous support of the Christian public,—such was the resolution, moved by the Rev. Ll. Bevan, and seconded by Captain Mackenzie, which was passed unanimously at Exeter Hall, under the chairmanship of the Earl of Shaftesbury.

Perched behind the noble chairman in thick masses, all round, were some seven hundred boys and girls,—clean, healthy, happy, well trained, and industrious. Especially did the sailor-boys of the *Chichester* attract admiration. At this time there are 500 boys, either in the refuge, Great Queen Street, or on board the training ship *Chichester*, or in the country house at Bisley, in Surrey; and 100 girls in the Sudbury and another 100 in the Ealing Home, where they are all fed, lodged, clothed, educated, and trained to earn their own livelihood. Besides the refuge work, the committee support five Day, five Night, and three Sunday Ragged Schools. In these schools upwards of 800 boys and girls receive a religious and useful education. A hope was expressed that they would soon have 1,000 children under their care, and two training ships, as they were doing for the homeless what could not be done by Government or a School Board. During last year 427 boys were admitted, and 422 were placed out. At Great Queen Street work had been done to the value of £1,131. From the *Chichester* 228 boys, after passing successfully the course of instruction and training set as a standard by the Committee, have been draughted into the Royal Navy and merchant service. At Bisley, weak and delicate boys had been made strong; 27 boys had been sent to Canada, and 1 to Bermuda. Since their establishment the refuges had sent out to service 2,992 boys, and 835 girls.

Last year the income was upwards of £26,000—thirty years ago it was but £200. The speeches were short and to the point.

Papers, Original and Selected.

HOSPITAL SUNDAY IN LONDON.

A MODERN philosopher, whose head has dwarfed his heart, intimates that "almsgiving only tends to generate a pauper spirit." That indiscriminate charity is an unmixed evil we should be loth to deny. Yet, to deny the use of charity because of the abuse, would be like interdicting the use of meat because some are addicted to gluttony. All that we have to ascertain is, that the claimant is a right object of charity, and then to aid and help him in such a way that he may be enabled to help himself.

For example, there is one form of charity to which the most critical can make no objection; we refer to hospitals, infirmaries, and convalescent homes. For when unskilled or casual labourers, whose earnings at best are either small or irregular, are struck down by disease, semi-starvation or pauperism must become the lot of themselves and families, unless, indeed, medical advice and fitting nourishment are provided free. But, happily, through the foresight of Christian philanthropists, there is no form of disease which has not its specific hospital; and medical skill of the highest order is freely given to alleviate those disorders "flesh is heir to."

If this is true of England generally, it is especially the case with London in particular; for noble as are its agencies for the removal of social and moral maladies, it is equally conspicuous for the number of its hospitals. Thus, it appears by "Low's Handbook to the Charities of London for 1873," that there are in the metropolis 15 general hospitals, the last of which was founded in 1856, and the first in 1547. The following is a complete list, with the date of their foundation:—St. Bartholomew's, 1547; St. Thomas's, 1553; Westminster, 1719; Guy's, 1721; St. George's, 1733; London, 1740; Charing Cross, 1818; Royal Free, 1828; North London or University, 1833; Metropolitan Free, 1836; Middlesex, 1806; King's College, 1839; St. Mary's, 1851; Great Northern, 1856; West London, 1856. From an estimate made from the same volume by the editor, Mr. Charles Mackeson, and published by him in a paper on "Metropolitan Charities," in the "Companion to the British Almanack," we learn that in addition

to the above there are upwards of 90 special hospitals, infirmaries, and surgical societies, making 105 institutions which are devoted to the alleviation, if not the cure, of those physical ailments which render the life of so many a burden.

Nor do the directors of hospitals neglect the spiritual interests of their patients. To most, chaplains are attached, who are marked by great ability in ministering to the sick and the sorrowful. In addition, City missionaries are appointed to the Fever, Guy's, London, and Royal Free Hospitals, and Scripture readers regularly visit others. All are accessible to the ministers of every denomination, who, we need scarcely say, gladly visit members of their own congregations.

The need for such hospitals, and the heavy expense entailed for the staff, medicines, and food, placed most of the provincial hospitals in a state of semi-insolvency. It was therefore suggested that one Sunday every year should be devoted to collections in every church and chapel in the town, the proceeds to be divided amongst the local hospitals and infirmaries. To this the ministers of every denomination gladly acceded, thereby acting in the spirit of that Divine Master who, if He strove to save the soul, never failed to heal the body. Thus it is that "Hospital Sunday" has become an institution in Birmingham, Newcastle, Leeds, and other large towns; and the success has been so great that the local hospitals are no longer in danger of extinction for want of funds.

It was not, however, till the autumn of last year that the propriety of an "Hospital Sunday" for London was suggested. The Lord Mayor invited the leading ministers and laymen of all denominations of the metropolis to a conference on the subject, when the proposal met with the readiest response, and a committee, consisting of Churchmen and Nonconformists, was appointed. An appeal was then issued to the ministers of 832 churches and chapels with signal success, for an affirmative answer was the rule from both church and chapel. Of the replies, about 400 were from the Church of England; the Congregationalists supplying 81, the Wesleyan and other Methodists 144, Baptists 46, Presbyterians 18, and other religious bodies 125.

The amount realised was upwards of £27,000. The morning service at St. Paul's was attended by the Prince and Princess of Wales and the Duke of Edinburgh; the sermon was preached by the Bishop of London, and the sum collected was £480. The

amount realised at the Temple Church was £322, at Mr. Spurgeon's Tabernacle £166, at Exeter Hall £69, and at St. James's Hall over £100. Her Majesty forwarded a donation of 100 guineas towards the fund. But the most notable collection was that at Clerkenwell. The vicar left his church and pleaded the cause on the famous "Clerkenwell Green" to a crowd of over 600 persons. The address was listened to throughout with marked attention, and when, at its conclusion, two huge boxes were carried round, the response to the appeal which had been made was cheerful from almost every one present.

Nor were the Jews, as might be expected from their liberality to the London Hospital, behind in this novel project to help the helpless; for, unlike their wealthy brother in the parable, the rich Jews never overlook Lazarus at their door. Thus, at fifteen London synagogues above £1,000 were collected by their wardens.

Not one of the least benefits of this "Hospital Sunday" in London was the spirit of true catholicity which was thereby evoked. This was beautifully illustrated by the Bishop of London in his sermon at St. Paul's. He said that "an unbelieving world points to the divisions of believers, contrasts their creeds, and counts up their sects, and asks scoffingly, 'Is this the love which Christians have one towards another?' I do not wonder. Such divisions are our weakness and our sin. They spring up only too surely from the soil of our fallen nature whenever men feel strongly on subjects of the deepest importance—whether it be in politics or in religion. They, at least, betoken earnestness in life, though they betray also the presence of human infirmity and error. But unbelievers do not know, or will not see, that underneath these differences, which, precisely because they are differences, are thrown up to the surface, there runs a broad, deep stream of common faith and common obligations—truths which we all believe, duties which we all admit, sympathies which we all share; and though these operate in the offices of Divine worship and religious teaching to produce variations, small or great, of doctrine or of discipline, all Christians can join, as they gladly and thankfully do to-day, in any great work of Christian benevolence, and can show that there is a true unity co-existing with much obvious diversity, and that in their Master's service and for their brethren's good, the cords of love still bind them together in one."

In order, however, to make "Hospital Sunday" a complete help

to the sick poor, we trust that next year "convalescent homes" will be included in the programme. Though only originated some thirty years ago, it appears by "Low's Handbook to the Charities of London" that there are already twenty such homes—the latest, which is attached to St. Bartholomew's Hospital, being opened last year, at Highgate. They are mostly planted by the sea-side, and when not, still far away from the smoke and dizzying whirl of London. And it is not too much to say that they have done much to rally the strength of hundreds of bread-winners, and thus to prevent any fear of those relapses which are ofttimes more perilous than the original disease.

In the bulk of cases—especially of those who are really penniless—mere cure is not sufficient. For if poor men and women are sent direct from the hospital to their homes, where, if the air is not poisonous, it is at least most impure, it is at once to destroy every physical energy, and plant the seeds of future disease. Then again, the earnings of those casual labourers whose children flock by hundreds into Ragged Schools are too small or precarious to permit them to buy that nourishing diet without which the system cannot possibly be built up. The convalescent home, then, is a necessary supplement to an hospital, and as such it should be regarded as an integral part of those hospital organisations which have done so much to lessen human misery, and to show that true Christians not only adopt a creed, but do their utmost to imitate Him who ever "went about doing good"—be it to Jew or to Samaritan.

LITTLE DICK, THE SHOEBLACK.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE PATCHWORK QUILT."

Chapter I.—How Dick was Met.

"Oh! is it really time to start, mamma?" cried a young girl, dressed in travelling dress, who was lounging on the terrace of an old country house. "I have to go round the garden, and say good-by to all the pets. Here, Lisa, we must have one more run round the old place."

"I am sorry to say it must be a short one, my darling," said Mrs. Baring, "for there are only ten minutes before we start, and you know papa does not like to be kept waiting. Edwards is wishing to see me about the luggage, so I must trust to you to be in time."

Mr. Baring was a country gentlemen who, wishing that his daughters should have the benefit of London masters, had let his country house, and

determined, much to the regret of the younger members of the family, to reside entirely in London for a time.

The journey was a long one, and it was about six o'clock, on a foggy October evening, when they arrived at an old-fashioned quaint-looking house in Park Street, Westminster; and were warmly welcomed by those servants who had been sent on to make things look a little straight and home-like.

"Well, here we are at last, Jane," said Evelyn, the eldest daughter, jumping out of the cab, and looking round with an air that did not express much satisfaction at their arrival. "It's been such a long, tedious journey, that I am quite knocked up, and wish we were well back at dear old Laneton again."

Poor Evelyn! it had been a sad trial for her to leave her country home, for she had always had the greatest horror of living in London. Her second sister, Lisa, was a pretty, quiet little girl, of ten years; and the third, Marianne, was a fat, merry child, of about seven.

The next morning Mrs. Baring proposed to the willing Evelyn a visit to Covent Garden, to purchase some gay flowers for the windows. "For," said she, "the house looks rather dull and forlorn to country eyes."

"Covent Garden," called John to the coachman, as he shut the door, and away they rattled. Upon their return to Park Street, a number of little shoeblacks eagerly ran to see who should first open the cab, in hope of a stray halfpenny. And, before Mrs. Baring could prevent her, Evelyn had thrust her fingers into a large bag of fruit, which her mother had given to her, and was scattering the contents among the eager little fellows, much to their delight, and it must be confessed, rather to the dismay of her mother.

"Oh, really, Evelyn, these are, indeed, country ways; remember you are not at Laneton."

"But, mamma, there is one poor little pale boy, who has not had anything. I may as well now finish the bag." So saying she hastily thrust the remainder of the fruit into the boy's hand, who touched his cap with a grateful smile.

"Somehow," said Evelyn, that day at luncheon, "I cannot help thinking of that little boy we saw this morning; he took my fancy greatly. I wonder if he lives near here."

"Well," said her father, "you must not encourage him too much, or we shall have a regular swarm of them about the door!"

"Oh, Lisa, here he is!" said Evelyn, one afternoon, as she was looking out of the window.

The demure little Lisa, who was reading, raised her eyes slowly from her book, and said, "Dear Evelyn, why do you think so much of that dirty little boy?"

"Here, little boy!" cried Evelyn, opening the window, and throwing a sixpence out.

He looked up in surprise, which speedily changed to delight when he saw the prize. He touched his cap with a beaming smile, which more than repaid the happy Evelyn.

From this time, each day brought fresh opportunities for Evelyn to show some kindness to the little boy. She never met him without bestowing at least a kind smile.

The boy to whom Evelyn had taken such a fancy, did not undeservedly win her interest, for it was soon remarked by Mrs. Baring that on Sunday he attended regularly both at church and at one of the Ragged Schools in that neighbourhood. Seeing this she did not discourage the little kindnesses which Evelyn bestowed upon him. And when, at last, the family left for the sea-side, every one was sorry to lose sight of little Dick.

Poor little fellow; he did indeed feel forlorn, as he watched them drive away. Evelyn had, by the interest she had taken in him, thrown a bright sunbeam upon his path, and it is easy to imagine how much he missed her. Often he wondered if he should ever see the family return again, and whether his young lady ever thought of the poor little shoeblack, whom she had left behind in the dirty streets of Westminster. Autumn came and went, and winter returned once more. Little Dick cast many wistful glances at those windows, from which he had been so often greeted by that kind young face, which always wore a smile of welcome.

ADULT WORK AT GEORGE YARD RAGGED SCHOOL, WHITECHAPEL.

In the most public thoroughfares of this metropolis places of worship abound; commodious churches, chapels, and mission rooms may be seen everywhere. Some of these buildings are filled by large congregations; others are but thinly attended—in fact, almost empty. The inhabitants of the back streets, courts, and alleys, are not to be met with in large numbers attending the ordinary houses of prayer; only a few attend, and so small is the number that it may truthfully be said that the great mass of this sort of people go nowhere. Old plans have failed to reach these people, who have been accustomed for years to stay at home on the Lord's day; for they leave not the alley, court-way, or back street where they reside, whilst some stay in their rooms. These people do not walk out in the public highways on Sundays, and listen to the preaching in the open air, neither do they attend the theatre services. True, now and then, a few of the men manage to get along to the groups of men meeting for discussion in the open air. Such may be seen unshaven and unwashed on the Sunday evenings, standing with some who are better dressed, forming an audience, surrounding a speaker who in turn condemns all denominations of Christians alike.

We will not stop to ask how it is that masses of the people are in this condition. We will not wait to inquire why so many of our fellow creatures are so sunk in poverty, and given to habits of dissipation—why men live on, seemingly crushed, uncaring, and almost uncared for—indifferent to the claims of religion—regardless of a coming judgment and an endless eternity.

It is time that Christian sympathy was largely extended to this class; that God's people by thousands were going in and out amongst such, sympathising with them in their trials—pitying their condition—advising them for the best—going to them with the Gospel of salvation—in love, for Christ's sake, entreating them to flee to Jesus, the Saviour of perishing sinners, and thus counteract the sad effects produced by impure literature, by bad counsellors, and past neglect.

For these classes Sunday Evening Services for the People were commenced at George Yard Ragged School, Whitechapel, about eighteen years ago. Thousands have listened to the truth as it is in Jesus. At these services, hundreds have found the Lord; some have been gathered home, and have joined the saints above; others are scattered here and there, casting in their lot among the Lord's people, as members of some congregation, whilst many remain on, worshipping here. Not only is there a large and increasing body of believers, but, during the week, answers have to be given to many inquirers. Some of them require much careful dealing with; indeed, one must look entirely to the Lord for guidance, counsel, and words. It is a pleasing sight to see so many persons present from the immediate neighbourhood. It is found a great privilege to lift up Jesus, and to be used by Him as instruments in the salvation of precious souls. The attendance at this service has varied from 150 to 300.

The Tuesday Evening Prayer Meeting is much prized. The numbers attending vary from 60 to 130. Here, God's people are refreshed; the heavy laden and the burdened meet with Him who giveth rest to the weary and maketh the burden light. Many have been constrained to say with the Psalmist, "I sought the Lord, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears."

The importance of carrying the Gospel to the Lodging Houses cannot be over-rated. The number of persons lodging varies according to the size of the house. In some houses there are 40, 60, 100, and up to 300 lodgers; few of these are ever seen in the House of God. There is one advantage in connection with this work, viz., there is always an audience to address. To the great credit of the lodgers, it must be observed that interruptions seldom occur. These services are valued by the people. Seven such services are now held; but more preachers and singers are required, so that a larger number of houses may be opened and services held.

Great improvement of late years has taken place in many of these houses. They are more clean and comfortable. This is owing to the supervision of the police officers appointed under the Lodging House Act.

Our Lord commanded His disciples to "go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind." Much blessing has attended the carrying out this much-neglected command of the Saviour. The servants of the Lord have gone out into the courts, alleys, and back streets, and the Master has been with them. Groups of people gather around the preachers, and listeners sit at their windows, taking part in the services, whilst well-wishers bring out forms and stools to seat the standers by. The Gospel has been carried to listening numbers—but the ones, twos, and threes have not been

neglected; for the command is "to preach the Gospel to every creature."

To check the terrible effects of drunkenness, it is absolutely necessary to keep before the public mind the principles of abstinence. It would be impossible in this brief sketch to make known the sad effects produced by insobriety. Every day cases the most heart-rending present themselves at this Institution. Hundreds of cases have been dealt with, and many who have joined this Temperance Meeting are now living in a state of comfort, and have joined some congregation of the Lord's people.

A Mothers' Meeting is held every Tuesday evening. It is one of the most useful portions of the adult work carried on in connection with this Institution. There are 106 members; frequently 90 have been present at one time. The Lord raised up two ladies to take up this work; aided by Him, they have laboured for the good of these poor women and for the glory of God.

An Enrolled Working Men's Benefit Club has continued its useful operations, and has greatly aided the members in times of sickness and bereavement.

Through the kindness of J. Le Cappelain, Esq., a fund has been provided to lend small loans. This money has been lent out chiefly to hawkers and costermongers. No interest is charged, nor is the borrower put to any expense; he has to find one security, who signs an agreement to pay the loan by instalments, should the borrower fail to keep up payment from any cause.

A District Visitors' and Tract Society is conducted by a useful band of visitors, who go from room to room on the Lord's day. They have a kind word for every one they meet, and leave a tract with all who will receive them. The visitors dive into courts, within the courts and alleys of the neighbourhood. They are kindly received, and are permitted to speak for Jesus to those who are indifferent to the blessings of the Gospel.

An Adult Bible Class is held at the Shelter for Outcast Boys in Wentworth Street. From 20 to 30 persons who reside in the neighbourhood attend.

For many years agents of some of the Evangelical Societies were in the habit of daily visiting from room to room with goodly results. But at length the Missionaries, Scripture Readers, and Bible Women ceased to labour in the neighbourhood, and the work of God suffered. But this could not be permitted; so the matter was brought before the Lord in prayer. He sent His servants, the Missionary and Bible Woman, and put it into the hearts of His stewards to supply the means necessary to pay them, so that the people are regularly visited, and there is not a room in which the servants of God have not been welcomed, and spoken for Jesus. It is right to mention that the Missionary and Bible Woman are not agents of any of the societies.

Thus we have briefly sketched the efforts put forth by the servants of the Lord to reach the masses of our neglected fellow-creatures. Through the various agencies in operation, about 1,000 children are brought under

Christian influences, and nearly 1,200 adults are, week by week, brought within the sound of the Gospel at George Yard Ragged School.

But, it might be asked, what as to the future? The Lord's work at George Yard must go on, and every opportunity will be embraced to bring the Gospel to the many men, women, and children out of Christ. The Master said, "Without me, ye can do nothing." Looking to Him for guidance, the preachers and teachers will go out again and again, into the courts and alleys, and gather in the most wretched we can find, ever seeking to win them for Jesus.

WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT TO TEACHERS.

SURELY there are not many workers who need encouragement more than Ragged School teachers; that is, if they really enter into the spirit of their work, and feel personally interested in the salvation of their scholars. The children they have to deal with are generally so utterly ignorant, and so steeped in misery and sin that it takes some time before the teachers can feel that they are getting to the hearts of these hardened ones; and very often just as the hope has sprung up that some success is likely to attend their efforts, the scholars disappear, and are often heard of no more. Despond not, however, for doubtless in your entry into the celestial kingdom some, if not many, of these apparently lost ones will greet you as having been the means of their salvation.

It is the will of the Master that His servants should not always—ofttimes not at all—see the fruits of their labour; yet, lest they should grow weary and faint by the way, He permits from time to time bright instances to appear of the efficacy of Ragged School teaching, and where these occur it seems only right that they should be as widely known as possible for the encouragement of those who may not have come in contact with similar cases.

The following letter was received by a Ragged School teacher, who regularly writes to her scholars, from a girl who had been in her class from March, 1865, to July, 1872. It may serve as a cheering example of the bread being found after many days:—

"DEAR MISS,—N—— and I thank you very much for the nice letters you sent us. How very kind of you to take the trouble to write letters to us when we know you have so many other things to do of much more importance. I have not had time to read the book you lent me as . . . . [domestic details and troubles]. Dear miss, I cannot thank you enough for all the good you have done me; you have taught me to think of higher and holier things than I did before. I know you sometimes feel very sad and disheartened, and think you are doing no good in the world; it seems very hard, and I often feel very sorry for you myself to think after you have laboured so many years in the Ragged School, and not to have seen much fruits of all your labour; but then you know where it says, 'My word shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I

please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.' And then there is that beautiful promise, 'Be thou faithful until death, and I will give thee a crown of life.' And I am quite sure you will win that crown, and have the Saviour's commendation of, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! enter thou into the joy of the Lord.' So that, dear miss, I know you feel it is worth a few years' toil and patience, and then you know what follows, why, rest,

'Rest for the Christian, rest,
When the last sad fight is o'er,
When the race is run, and the crown is won,
Rest, and for evermore.'

And I know the more trials and difficulties we have to contend with here on earth, the more sweeter that rest will seem in the end. Dear miss, please to excuse every imperfection in the writing and composition of this miserable letter. I hope you will not think I have taken a liberty in addressing you as I have.—I remain, if I may call myself, your humble friend.

"October 9th, 1872."

This scholar has received no other education than that given in the Ragged Day and Sunday Schools. She and the companion to whom she refers at the commencement of the letter, have regularly attended a place of worship on Sunday evenings since they left the school. They also call to see their teacher occasionally, so that pleasant, and, we may hope, profitable intercourse is kept up. It is very desirable that teachers should not quite lose sight of their scholars when they leave the school; this is often unavoidable, but with thoughtful care it might sometimes be managed.

SCHOOL AGENT'S WORK.

NO. II.—NORTH AND EAST.

FROM Mr. Curtis's Thirteenth Annual Report we make the following extracts, as indicating the state of the schools in the north and east of London.

Pursuant to the wishes of the Committee, much time has been spent in interviews with the officers of various institutions, for the purpose of obtaining particulars touching the various operations, and for inciting to renewed and continuous effort. Besides which, two months were spent in the office.

Also during the year I paid the following visits:—To Sunday Schools, 115; to Day Schools, 397; to Evening Schools, 173; to Special Business and Conferences, 92; to Parents' Meetings, 10; to Ragged Churches, 5; to Committee Meetings, 7; to Bands of Hope, 3; to Public Meetings, 5; to Old Scholars' Meetings, 2. Total, 809.

NEW OR EXTENDED OPERATIONS.

Although the past year was fraught with anxiety to many tried workers, yet the courage of most of the *true* friends proved equal to the occasion, as

is evinced by the number of new social and missionary operations, which are as follow :—

1 Day School, 3 Children's Churches, 3 Ragged Churches, 5 Service of Song or Singing Classes, 3 Prayer Meetings, 2 Bands of Hope, 1 Sewing Class, 1 Mothers' Meeting, 1 Penny Reading, 3 Churches formed, 1 Dorcas Society, 2 Infant Nurseries, 1 Drum and Fife Band, 3 Penny Banks, 1 Bible Class, 1 Working Men's Club; total, 37.

Alterations, Enlargements, or Removals.

Stratford has enlarged the infant room, provided a lavatory, repaired, painted, and whitewashed the entire building, and erected suitable w.-c. offices. *Hamilton Place* has erected a gallery about seven feet from the floor, by which increased accommodation has been provided for sixty children; two or three of the teachers did the entire work in their spare time. *Union Walk*, closed, has removed its mission operations to the Mission Hall, in Union Street. *Brunswick Street* has improved its ventilation. *Chequer Alley* has transformed a public-house into premises suitable for mission purposes. *Moreton Road* is now erecting a room for a Mission Church and class-rooms. *Castle Street* has taken the adjoining house for a Youths' Institute. *Little Denmark Street* has removed to Broad Street. *Hartshorn Court* has removed into the premises in Golden Lane, formerly occupied by the parochial school, which are much better adapted for school purposes than those vacated, also having a courtyard sufficiently large to give the younger children an airing. *Hope Place*, Stepney, during the summer put up a vast tent, in which mission services were held every night, at which as many as two thousand persons were frequently gathered. In consequence of a gale having blown down the tent, a music-hall was hired: this building, and the public-house of which it formed a part, was subsequently purchased for £4,200, which sum was raised in three weeks. *George Yard*, Whitechapel, has taken a fresh lease of its premises for an optional term of seven, fourteen, or twenty-one years.

Sunday Schools

are conducted by 84 institutions. Of these 41 meet in the morning, and are attended by 2,650 children; 66 meet in the afternoon, with an attendance of 8,043 scholars, and 55 meet in the evening, at which 8,595 are present. Total, 11,538.

The total number of teachers is 1,685. Some of these teachers are occasional, coming on alternate Sundays, or less frequently. The average attendance is 1,298. The order, as a rule, is good. Now and then some of the old tricks are repeated, such as burning cayenne pepper, letting sparrows fly, or sending missiles from a catapult; the greater nuisance arises from boys outside, who have been refused admission on account of the paucity of teachers. These occasional outbursts of fun and violence indicate the amount of energy and tact required to control such a mass of rude force. More teaching power is the universal cry. Why the churches do not supply it is a startling enigma.

Our institutions themselves are at fault in not looking more to their Bible

Classes, of which there are 55 in the north and east of London, with an attendance of 1,069. Some of these are followed up on the week days by Prayer Meetings and Earnest Inquiry Classes. By such means a solid addition to the teaching power is in continual preparation. One institution has as many as ten helpers, whose usefulness is attributable to the agency of Bible Classes; other schools can show their five or six teachers so raised. Two or three institutions, whose secular operations have been transferred to the Board, are this year, in their mission work, shorn of their former glory.

Bell Alley, London Wall, has been closed in consequence of the death of an excellent lady—Miss Lloyd—who for many years devoted five nights weekly, from 7 to 10; and for one or two years devoted from 11 to 3 in the day to the gathering in of children, both big and little, for secular and Christian instruction. Besides this, she devoted a large portion of time to the visitation of the parents, giving them help in need for the body as well as the soul; also the afternoon and evening of the Sabbath-day was given to Christian work. She had the *mind of Christ*.

Bluegate Fields, a most useful operation, situated in a locality presenting all those features of squalor, vice, ignorance, and crime, against which we especially war, has been closed and pulled down for a cutting now in progress through the street for the Eastern Railway. There is no certainty about its revival, but an amalgamation is talked of with Buross Street. Such a coalition might result in a large and vigorous institution.

Colchester Street has been under the superintendence of a man of piety and enthusiasm for twenty-two years; its teachers are a united and earnest body, who, with the superintendent, every Sunday keep the place all in a glow with activity and kindness. Their teaching and prayers have been attended with the most happy results. This spiritual force is in jeopardy, through the lease of the building expiring in March.

Chicksand Street, so long under the superintendence of Mr. Adams, and and which very much declined after his death, is regaining its excellent condition.

King Edward Street carries on the Sunday work formerly conducted at Albert Street. Mr. Montague, the able superintendent (a fruit of Ragged School work), has united with him a compact and earnest body of teachers.

Wentworth Street has increased in numbers. The teachers have their patience, energy, and love put to a sore strain by the class which is gathered in. Most of the teachers come from a distance.

Nichol Street and *Hope Place* have Sunday evening schools, with attendances reaching, at times, to as many as eight hundred.

In connection with its Sunday evening work, *Vincent Street, Vinegar Ground*, holds a meeting, which is entitled "The Family Altar in the School-room; or, Half-hours with the Saviour." A large and well written notice so entitled is hung up in the room, accompanied with the following particulars: "During the winter months the Sunday-school teachers, with "Sunday scholars above the age of 14, will assemble at 8 o'clock each "Sunday evening at Vincent Street Ragged School, for about half an hour, "to engage in devotional and conversational exercise. Parents and elder

"persons of both sexes are most earnestly and affectionately invited to at-
"tend, and form part of the family group.

"The teachers are anxious that all stiffness and formality be thrown
"aside, and that round a cheerful fire thoughts may be exchanged about the
"journey of life, and the happy home beyond the skies. 'Come, and wel-
"come,' 'Good news from Heaven,' 'Come unto Me all ye that labour
"and are heavy laden and I will give you rest,' 'Him that cometh unto Me
"I will in no wise cast out,' 'The blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin.'"
Then follows a list of subjects, from Dec. 8 to the end of April, and the names of the persons who introduce them. A few of the subjects are as follows:—"Fruit from the Tree of Life," "The duty of the young early to seek Christ," "The shame of Christ and its consequences," "The monthly evening prayer meeting."

Day Schools

are conducted by 46 institutions, which may be thus classified: 10 boys, 10 girls, and 37 mixed and infant, making 57 day schools, which are conducted by distinct teachers in separate rooms, with an attendance of 6,485 scholars. The number of teachers and assistant-teachers is 74, who are aided by 200 monitors.

My time this year was so occupied in other ways that I was unable to make the whole of the usual examinations. Of 1,007 examined in reading, 325 are marked good; 248 moderate; and 100 fair; making a total of 673. The other subjects examined passed in about the same proportions. Twenty-four buildings are now used by the London School Board. In two of them day schools were not, and in two others cheap pay schools were, held.

Teachers.

Three masters and four mistresses have obtained second-class certificates. Nine have sat this Christmas with a reasonable prospect of passing. Two or three occupy the post of assistant teachers, and intend sitting at the next examination. This is some evidence of the quality of our teachers.

One master, over sixty years of age, has been thrown out of employment. He has been many years in the work; was with Field Lane at its commencement; has also been a City missionary and Scripture reader. Has been for the past twelvemonth out of employ.

One mistress, over twenty years in the work, and 70 years of age, has found friends in her committee and the Congregational church with which she is connected, by whom unitedly a sum of £40 will be raised yearly for her maintenance.

Future of Day Schools.

With regard to the future of the Day Schools, some will inevitably be killed by the action of the London School Board, while others have a vitality derived from their usefulness, and the hearty support of their committees.

Some of our local friends have a laudable desire to continue their secular operations in order to retain the services of old and faithful servants. It is not their wish to benefit the teachers regardless of the benefit that might

accrue to the poor children from other arrangements, but they hope to obtain that increased help from the public and this Union, by which an addition may be made to their teachers' staff, so as to combine efficiency with benevolence.

There is no doubt a need for free Day Ragged Schools. This is virtually acknowledged by the London School Board, directly affirmed by the Lancashire Ragged School Association, and also in a recent report by the Croydon Ragged School. These are needed in order to accommodate the unavoidable irregularities of poor children who are still in dirt and rags and wretchedness: these, having feeble mental power combined with animal restlessness and chronic lawlessness, can be better dealt with in a school of a missionary character, than by any cut-and-dried system, however skilfully and elaborately prepared.

Night Schools

are held by 47 institutions; 28 are boys, 27 are girls, and 19 are mixed; making a total of 73 schools, with an attendance of 3,692 scholars; 19 schools are conducted by voluntary teachers, and nine others have paid teachers, materially assisted by kind voluntary help. Paid teachers, 55; Voluntary teachers, 245.

Stratford.—The big rough lads and equally rough girls who attend here from the jute factory were for a long time very troublesome to the painstaking master and mistress, but by energy in teaching, firmness in discipline, and love as a motive power, they have gained the ascendancy, and hold them firmly in hand.

Rochester Place, *Hornsey Road*, and *Blenheim Road*, collect together a very troublesome class. Their superabundant animal energy is continually urging them to some funny tricks, practical jokes, or riotous mirth, but a threat of ejectment soon brings them to reason.

Moreton Road, besides the ordinary night scholars, has two excellent classes of adults, who appear to take great interest in their work.

Rufford's Buildings continues to be kindly aided by students from the Church Missionary College. There has been an improvement in the attendance this year.

Nichol Street has had most excellent order. The arrangements for teaching have improved, and an improved system of marking the attendance has been adopted, which saves time, does not interfere with the order, and defies forgery. The boys and girls are provided with a book, ruled into as many spaces as there are attendances in a session. On each night the book is stamped with a device inimitable unless by a stamp. I hope this institution will continue its excellent labours. The refinement and culture and piety of some eighty ladies and gentlemen, so necessary to tame down wildness, to refine grossness, to call mind into activity, by acting through the affections, cannot be furnished by the teachers of ordinary training colleges, who are especially under pressure for secular results.

Britannia Row has had a large attendance of big lads, some sixty or seventy, and an ample attendance of voluntary teachers. What was Elder Walk, now Britannia Row, has continued its night school, although its day

operations are under the Board. Its numbers have been large, and owing to the presence of good desks the discipline and teaching have progressed.

Fox Court continues its excellent voluntary work, and strives in every possible way to further the progress of the boys and girls, who are under the care of an excellent staff of voluntary teachers, some of whom have laboured for many years.

Castle Street, Long Acre, continues its useful labours; it has not so dirty and ragged a class, nor so poor, as may be found elsewhere, but the boys are big, strong, rough, rude, and heathenish. Of such it gathers upwards of 130. Here may be seen gentlemen of position and education, the Messrs. Hogg, Kinnaird, Pelham, Brown, and others: the extremes of society are bridged over by their kind and familiar intercourse.

The Bedfordbury School, which is much needed, and under the same committee, when reopened, will no doubt gather some of the coarsest and wildest material to be found in London.

It would be well at the commencement of next autumnal session in each school to have a tea to which none will be eligible but those holding tickets. This may be a means of picking up the social refuse, and if all were holden on the same evening the result would be more satisfactory. Having once got the stray sheep, all sorts of laudable devices should be resorted to in order to retain them.

Children's Churches.

There are nineteen of these in my districts, with an attendance of 1,535, some of which are conducted on Sunday mornings after the class-teaching, some on Sunday evenings, and others on week evenings.

Ragged Churches

or mission services are held in forty-four institutions, with an attendance of 4,335.

A Service of Song,

or a singing class, is held in five institutions. These beautiful services are an easy means of fixing important truths in the mind; as a necessary element the songs should have an inspiriting chorus. Open-air services, eight in number, conducted by *Hartshorn Court, George Yard, Lamb and Flag, Hope Place* and others, are mostly choral. Hundreds are attracted by the means of children's voices that would pass heedlessly by the preacher's invitation: in the pauses of song some few arrowy words are let fly from the gospel bow at a venture.

Tract Distribution and Lodging-house Visitation

are combined at ten institutions. Four have a juvenile tract brigade. Of these *Lamb and Flag* and *Hartshorn Court* are most conspicuous. Lodging-house visitation is carried on by seven institutions. It requires great courage to visit these places, as they are mostly the abodes of the vagrant, depraved, and criminal class; but so accessible are the very worst to the power of love, that the friends who go are encouraged to repeat their visits.

Missionaries and Bible Women

are employed in connection with eighteen institutions. These are found of most excellent use, as the parents willingly receive those who come from the schools, and whose mission is frequently to see after their temporal as well as their spiritual necessities.

Penny Readings or Lectures

have been adopted with success by *Fox Court*, *Hartshorn Court*, *Chequer Alley*, and *Clare Market*. At these entertainments children and parents are provided for on alternate nights. They are made a means of instruction and entertainment, and in some cases what is provided would delight an audience of refined and intelligent people.

Bands of Hope

are conducted by twenty-two institutions, having 2,745 members. Some have during the year, viz., *Brackley Street* and *Carr Street*, established a senior Band of Hope; the members pay some small subscription which furnishes a monthly tea.

Flower Shows

have been held by *Kentish Town*, *Ferdinand Place*, *Nichol Street*, *Chequer Alley*, and *Lamb and Flag:* with some an industrial exhibition is most advantageously united.

Infant Nurseries.

Field Lane provides for fifty infants. *Chequer Alley* has just started one. *Lamb and Flag* intend having one. These institutions are an advantage to elder children, as through them they, to a large degree, are set free to attend school.

Children's Dinners

are given in twenty-four schools. Many thousands of children are thus during the coldest weather provided with a substantial meal, whose ordinary food is only dry bread. During a severe winter one of our largest institutions distributed as many as 40,000 rations. The weekly meals in the various schools amounted to 5,656.

Prayer Meetings

are held by sixty-five institutions. To many of these the elder scholars are admitted: sometimes large numbers attend. At *Nichol Street* the prayer meetings of the teachers and elder scholars are held alternately. The total attendance at these gatherings is 2,196.

Banks and Clubs.

There are fifty-five Penny Banks; some of them receive sums as low as one farthing. The depositors to these are over 15,000, and the amount deposited upwards of £6,000. There are also Clothing Clubs, Boot Clubs, Coal Clubs, Children's Sick Clubs, Adult Provident Clubs, and Barrow Clubs, and Donkey Clubs to aid poor costermongers. An Emily Fund in connection with Mrs. Orsman's, *Golden Lane*, was recently established by Lord Shaftesbury as a memorial to the late Lady Shaftesbury; its object is to provide poor girls, upon condition of repayment, with the means of purchasing goods for sale.

INDUSTRIAL CLASSES.

Thirty-five, in which 1,484 girls are taught plain needle-work, and some are taught knitting.

MOTHERS' MEETINGS.

Forty-seven, attended by 1,674. At these gatherings many pleasant and profitable hours are passed.

SCHOOL LIBRARIES.

There are forty-three of these with 12,246 volumes. The kindness and liberality of the Tract Society enabled this Union to benefit several of the local libraries by a grant of books.

RESULTS.

During the year I have stimulated the Sunday work in several schools, and prevented the abrupt closing of several others; have promoted the establishment of services of song, and saved several institutions from separating from this Society; have brought about an increase and improvement in the appliances of certain schools, and aided in the affiliation of others. A suggestion also made at a committee meeting touching the advisability of transferring the mission work of an institution which was on the decline, to some vigorous Christian church, is about being carried out; and several teachers who have passed away from my supervision, have expressed their thanks to me for services to them and the school.

CONCLUSION.

It is a pleasure to know that during a state of transition, and amid the confusion and panic created in many minds by the operation of the London School Board, that so little harm has been done to the social and missionary work of this Society; yet much remains to be done—the fields are golden unto the harvest, but the labourers are few. Let us cry for efficient and adequate help to the Lord of the harvest. The Ragged School Union, or, in other words, Juvenile Gospel Mission, was established as an especial Christian mission to poor children. And to them and their surroundings it has in every sense been a mission of grace and mercy, for it has fought with dirt, and ignorance, and vice, and crime, and pestilence. Thousands of poor heathen children yet exist; our mission, therefore, has not terminated. Then woe to us and to others if we cease or slacken in the work, "For whosoever putteth his hands to the plough and looketh back is not fit for the kingdom of God."

As friends of poor children, let us gird up the loins of our minds and run patiently this race with fresh alacrity.

PAID RAGGED SCHOOL TEACHERS' EXCURSION.

"It will be a treat to join once more in the social gathering of teachers at Bushey." "Thank you for the prospect of another day's enjoyment." Such was the burden of the replies received in response to the invitation of the Committee of the Ragged School Union, for the masters and mistresses to spend a day together in the country.

After the Committee had decided to renew this annual trip, hitherto fraught with so much pleasure to all concerned, the question was asked, Where shall it take place? Many new spots were suggested, but all seemed to lack some important element available for enjoyment at Bushey Park and Hampton Court Palace; so it was ultimately resolved to follow the plan of previous years. Saturday, June 21, was a day eagerly longed for by many toilers in the worst nooks and crannies of this vast city, wherein the Ragged Schools are rightly for the most part located.

The early morn was not auspicious, but as it advanced the sun shone brightly in a cloudless sky, and thus removed one anxiety as to the day's success. The noble avenue of trees fringing the broad road, and the green turf of the park never looked more beautiful than when the party of nearly 200 passed along from Teddington station to the tent erected at the Hampton end of the royal demesne.

After a substantial repast, Mr. H. R. Williams, who was supported by Mr. W. Locke, a Vice-President of the Society, and some members of the Committee, welcomed the teachers in the name of the Committee. He spoke in feeling terms of Mr. Gent's presence under more favourable circumstances than last year, and concluded by congratulating all present on the pleasure of meeting together once more, amid such delightful scenes and charming weather. Mr. Gent next rose to express his gratitude for the kind remarks which had been made in reference to himself, and for the hearty manner in which they had been received.

The joyous aspect of nature around, illumined by the warm rays of the summer sun, infused a happy spirit over all present, and the evening advanced with tantalising quickness. The return to town was speedy and safe, and the friends emerged from Waterloo station cherishing pleasant memories of another annual trip spent together under the auspices of the Ragged School Union.

Poet's Corner.

A HARVEST RHYME.

Oh! reapers of life's harvest, why stand with rusted blade,
Until the night draws round ye, and day begins to fade?
"Why stand ye idle," waiting for reapers more to come?
The golden morn is passing; "why stand ye idle," dumb?

Thrust in your sharpened sickle, and gather in the grain,
The night is fast approaching, and all were then in vain.
The Master calls for reapers, and shall He call in vain?
Shall sheaves lie there ungarnered, and waste upon the plain?

Arouse, O Lord, the sleepers, ere the dread day of doom
Shall break upon our world, and Thou to judgment come;
Let each one hear Thee saying, "I'm longing yet to save;"
Speak to each soul, Lord Jesus, free pardon they shall have.

For still in Gilead's mountain is found the wondrous balm,
Which every sin-sick soul can heal, and every grief can charm;
Put forth Thy strength, Most Mighty, on this Thy harvest-day,
And gather in the straying ones, and show them Thy blest way.

Shout forth, dear Lord, with clarion-blast, ere the harvest-day be fled;
That voice new life can give to the souls that still are dead!
Oh, let Thy voice of power, speaking in Thy blest Word,
In every region of the earth with mighty power be heard!

While sainted ones are sounding their new-made harps of gold,
And singing forth Thy praises within the heavenly fold,
Oh let Thine own beloved ones chase all their cares away,
And joyfully look forward to that blest harvest-day!

And while they journey onward, oh, may they bring to Thee
Those tearful ones who in the world still wander wearily!
Lord, let us work and wait for Thee till we shall hear Thee say,
"Come, enter in, my blessed ones; *this is* My harvest-day!"

Teachers' Column.

TWO ESSENTIALS.

In all teaching two things are essential. The first is *knowledge*. This is indispensable. It is impossible to teach that of which we have no knowledge. We must know, or we cannot enlighten. On the same principle, we cannot teach that well which we understand but imperfectly. Hence the necessity of every teacher using all means to become acquainted with the subject he is to teach.

The second thing essential is *aptness*, or ability to make others see what we see, understand what we understand, and feel those same truths as we feel them. Unless there is this aptness to teach, however competent the instructor may be, he cannot well communicate his knowledge to others. His mind is a reservoir that may indeed contain a great deal and have an immense receptive capacity, but it never gives out any of its contents in such a way as to benefit others.

The importance of this ability to impart is nowhere more clearly seen than in the work of teaching in Sunday Schools. The minds of the scholars are inquiring, and, if what is taught is presented in a clear, simple style, with illustrations, and in language they can comprehend, they will understand and be anxious to know more respecting it. But, if it be not brought to the level of their thoughts and modes of expression,

they will not only not understand, but will lose interest, and grow impatient, under the well-meant but misdirected efforts of the teacher.

We believe that the minds of children ordinarily are not dull, but, on the contrary, quick to apprehend what is taught. And not only so, but the young mind kindles with enthusiasm when it receives a new idea, when it feels that it has learned something, and that not by having it "beat in," but by seeing it for itself, so that it flashes on the mind like a new discovery. Let the teacher aim to assist the child in getting a clear knowledge of his lesson, leading rather than dictating, and the work of imparting instruction is half done.

This aptness in teaching, we are aware, is not with all a natural gift. And even where it is a gift, it needs culture and practice, in order to be made effective. They who teach have two duties: one is to acquire information, the other is to qualify themselves to impart what they acquire. Teachers, therefore, must study how to say what they know; how to illustrate and to enforce it.

Nor is there any teacher who may not improve himself greatly in this. He has but to ask himself one question, How can I best make my class understand and feel the subject of this lesson? If the teacher knows anything about the lesson, his class ought to know what he knows, and are looking for him to communicate it to them. This he ought to be able to do. This, we insist, if due attention be given, can be done. It is not an impossible thing. It may not be done equally well by all, but all can improve.—*Sunday Teacher's Treasury.* —W. H. H. M.

Children's Gallery.

THE BIBLE IN THE HOVEL.

I KNEW a little ministering child, grown to womanhood now. When about nine years of age she was accustomed to pass a hovel in the village in which she went to school, where dwelt a crippled woman, from whom many of the villagers shrank in dislike or terror. The poor dwarf, for she was little more, was bowed down with her infirmities of body. She could only move from place to place on her knees and hands, on which clogs were fastened to protect her from the roughness of the road. She had a bad temper; the affliction of her body was but the type of the state of her soul, which was fast bound in the chains of ignorance and sin. She had never been taught the first truths of Christianity; she could not read, neither had any person read the Word of God to her, or spoken to her of Jesus.

Isabel Garrod thought this forlorn creature would be happy if, in these long hours she spent alone, she could read of the love of God to sinful men, and how He gave His beloved Son to die on the cross, that through His blood all that believed might be cleansed and pardoned. So, one day, she took her early lesson book and her Bible and went to Mary's dreary hovel and offered to teach her all she knew. The offer was eagerly accepted. From this time the hours of play and an occasional holiday were devoted to this labour of love.

I think the angels who watch over the heirs of salvation must have smiled lovingly on this child who, leaving her playmates at the school door, passed the hours of the bright summer afternoon diligently imparting, with the alphabet, her own simple knowledge of the truth, with the patience and perseverance of a mother with a child. Sure am I that Jesus smiled on her. Mary loved her young teacher, and would listen in deep attention.

"I cannot tell you my delight," said Isabel, "when she could spell the words herself, and ask me for the meaning; she could read a little in less than a year, and was able to improve herself. We always closed our lessons with a hymn, to which she listened with intense pleasure, looking up in my face the whole time while I sang, with the wonder of a child. When I returned home after a long absence she could read and understand the New Testament.

She desired to join a prayer-meeting, and entreated to return her thanks openly there to a gracious God, who had shown her such love and mercy. That thanksgiving was never forgotten by those who heard her. It commenced, "Lord God, I thank Thee! I did not know I had a soul, but now I do!"

A wicker carriage was procured for her, and ready hands were ready to draw her to the prayer-meeting; before then she had been carried there more than once by a kind neighbour. Thus the helpless Mary, led by a child, first heard the glad sounds of the Gospel proclaimed, and then thankfully declared her trust in the atoning blood of her crucified and risen Lord, whom henceforth she desired to follow.

It was no common love that bound that poor forlorn one to the little Isabel; nor is the tie severed, though one now beholds the face of her Lord unveiled, and the other watches for His appearing.

You see, then, dear reader, there was work for even a little school girl! Is the Good Shepherd your shepherd? Then follow Him, and you shall know His will.

ELLA.

Correspondence.

SICK RAGGED SCHOLARS AT THE SEA-SIDE.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

SIR,—Having been engaged until the present year, or more properly previous to May last, as a volunteer in preaching in the theatres of London, and helping in other works in which you take great interest, I have ventured to bring before your notice a form of charity which has been overlooked.

I have paid great attention to Ragged Schools and Orphanages, and found that when the holiday time came round, while some of the children had friends to visit, others were left to pine over their lot. It needs but a few kind friends to unite their efforts, and by taking or sending out to our watering-places a few each of these children, much good may be done to cheer and help these little ones. I have tried it here: and others, stimulated by my example, are about to join in the work. I thought I might bring the matter before you, as the idea may never have occurred to you. I nearly always have one sick orphan residing with me, and as soon as he recovers, which in our balmy air he soon does, I exchange him for another.

I have not applied to you for aid for my present effort, as I trust the Lord to send it me; but I thought you may know of one or two convalescents among your Ragged Schools or Shoeblack Brigade, to whom a fortnight's sea air may be a benefit. If so, if the means were

found, I could procure tickets for railway journey for the low sum of 7s. 6d. return; and they could come with my other orphans. I am willing to bear any labour for them, but cannot afford the expense. I shall have as many down as I can get funds for. I have fifteen on my list now, and they come on Friday, 13th of June.—I remain, &c.,

13, Nevill Street, Southport, W. L. LANG.

28*th May*, 1873.

Facts and Scraps.

GRAY'S YARD RAGGED SCHOOL.—On June 10th the Teachers of this School presented Mr. J. Edmunds, the Superintendent of the Sunday School and Ragged Church, with a gold watch and the Religious Tract Society's Annotated Bible. For the past sixteen years he has been an earnest worker in Ragged Schools, and the success of the large Ragged Church at Gray's Yard is ascribable to his untiring labours.

BOOT AND SHOE CLUBS.—There are clubs and benefit societies of all kinds, but we cannot fancy an institution that would do more immediate and lasting good than a "good boots club" for the benefit of women. It is just the weak point in their dress which they can hide, and they invariably do it, whereas it lies at the foundation of their health and that of their children, and it should claim their first attention. We laugh at the clattering wooden sabots of the French and German working classes, but in comparison with the flimsy, ill-made foot coverings our own poor indulge in they are more healthy and lasting.—*Cassell's Magazine.*

CONSUMPTION OF SPIRITS.—The Excise returns show that in the year 1872 duty was paid on 26,872,183 gallons of home-made spirits for consumption in the United Kingdom, being an increase of no less than 2,708,539 gallons over the quantity in the preceding year. The quantity for consumption in England was 14,468,803 gallons, an increase of 1,594,071 gallons; in Scotland, 6,452,831 gallons, an increase of 781,354 gallons; and in Ireland, 5,950,549 gallons, an increase of 333,114 gallons. The quantity of foreign and colonial spirits imported into the United Kingdom in 1872 and entered for home consumption there was 9,030,835 proof gallons, an increase of 135,326 gallons over the quantity in the preceding year.

DRUNKENNESS IN THE ARMY.—The fund formed by fining soldiers for drunkenness has mounted up to £45,852 since the introduction of the penalty in July, 1869, and a wise policy has been adopted which seeks to utilise the money in the way best calculated to encourage sobriety. This is effected by granting gratuities to well-conducted soldiers when they receive their discharge—ten shillings for each good-conduct badge, if the man retires at the close of the first period of service, and £1 per badge if the second term of years has been completed, with an additional sovereign if no charge of drunkenness has been recorded against him throughout the preceding ten years. These rewards for sobriety and good conduct, vouched for as they will be in certificates issued by the commanding officer, will be of great use to those who may wish to give some trustworthy old soldier employment. We shall see, too, in a few years time, whether Englishmen, Irishmen, or Scotchmen carry off the lion's share of the rewards.

Could not a somewhat similar system be applied to factories, &c., where large bodies of men are employed? asks *Land and Water.*

Notices of Meetings.

MARIGOLD PLACE, BERMONDSEY.

The annual meeting of the above school took place in the schoolroom, the chair being taken by the Earl of Shaftesbury.

The hon. secretary, Mr. Farmer, read the report, which stated that during the past year the committee have been much assisted and encouraged by the increased liberality of several of their supporters and by the duplication of the annual grant made by the Parent Union. On Sundays the school has been open every afternoon and evening, when the average attendance has been, afternoon 113, evening 200; these being taught in classes by a devoted staff of zealous teachers. In addition to such means of instruction a well selected library of 300 volumes has been largely circulated amongst the scholars, the books being eagerly sought after and diligently read in their several homes. The Day School has also continued in steady operation: the number on the books has been 249 against 190 in the previous year. While the cold weather continued, dinners were given twice a week to the extent in all of 2,687 meals. Mothers' Meetings have been held twice a week, viz., on Monday evenings and Wednesday afternoons, and the average weekly attendance has been 68. The amounts subscribed during the year have been—for clothing, £19 6s. 10d.; for coals, £12 6s. 7d.; and by the children for clothing, £1 7s. 10d. The Mothers' Prayer Meeting, which is conducted in the mission room by a Bible woman, has prospered during the year. The Penny Bank has had a very considerable increase in the amount of business done. In 1870 an increase of £52 was reported, in 1871 there was a still further increase reported of £40, but in 1872 the increase has equalled these two sums together.

The meeting was addressed by Mr. W. T. Charley, M.P.; Revs. S. Charlesworth, J. Farren; Messrs. E. J. Hytche, D. Matheson, and Wilton.

CHEQUER ALLEY, CITY ROAD.

The annual meeting of the Hope Mission, Chequer Alley, St. Luke's, was held in the Presbyterian Church, Colebrook Row, under the presidency of the Rev. Thain Davidson.

Mr. S. Moore, the secretary, read the annual report, which stated: The committee endeavoured years ago to beget and foster saving habits, by the establishment of a Penny Bank. The amount paid in during the past twelve months exceeds that of the previous year by £10 13s. 8d., and the number of depositors has advanced from 617 to 645. The committee have also under their charge a loan fund, which is lent out in small sums, without interest, to poor costermongers and others, to purchase stock, or to tide over evil days. To meet the intemperance in the district the committee have this year tried two schemes, one to empty the publichouses, the other to keep them from filling—a Workmen's Club, and a Band of Hope. A more successful experiment was the attempt to establish a *crèche*, or day nursery. The number of children in the *crèche* has risen to twenty; and only the want of accommodation for more keeps it at that figure. Dinners have been given weekly during the winter to the poor children of the district; the total number of dinners given being 2,630. The Mothers' Meeting has been established five years, and yearly increases in numbers and influence. A Coal Club was commenced, and the twenty-four members of it enjoyed the fruits of their forethought during the

coal famine last winter. A Sunday Morning Service has been commenced. The Sunday Night Service has shared in the general prosperity. Open-air Services were carried on during the summer by several friends of the Mission in the courts and alleys of the district. The Sunday Schools have advanced in numbers and efficiency. The Children's Morning Service is continued. The Afternoon and Night Schools have been specially successful. There are now 28 teachers in the afternoon school, and 26 teachers in the night school; the attendance of scholars during the winter has averaged 300. Singing Classes have been conducted weekly. A Mutual Improvement Society for young men, a Sewing Class for young women, and a week-night Bible-class for young lads, have been established during the past year. Eight of our scholars have had prizes awarded to them by the Ragged School Union for retaining their situations with good characters for twelve months. The Scholars' Library is so well used that the librarian can no longer accomplish all his work on Sunday afternoon, and requires now to change the books on alternate Sundays for boys and girls. The Tract Society has continued its useful work during the past year. In that period the visitors have distributed over 10,000 tracts, and paid, on an average, 200 visits weekly.

FIELD LANE, FARRINGDON ROAD.

On June 11 the thirty-first annual meeting of this school was held in the schoolroom, the Earl of Shaftesbury in the chair.

The Report stated that during the year 55 boys had been in the Boys' Industrial School, and 48 girls in the Girl's Industrial School, who are being trained for domestic service. At the Christmas dinner 500 sat down, and 100 families were supplied at home. Above 100 children had been fed daily from the broken victuals kindly supplied by City firms. The children had made 310 garments during the year, and paid in £14 4s. 8d. towards their purchase. The average attendance at the Girls' Sewing Classes had been 175, and the garments made were 984. The average attendance at the Night School for boys had been 45, to that for girls 30; and 37 of these had received prizes for keeping their situations over twelve months. The Band of Hope numbered 400, and during the year some of the children had been the means of reclaiming their drunken parents. The Youths' Institute numbered 24, and had a library of 300 books, and classes for instruction. There had been 130 girls of good character admitted into the Servants' Training Home, and 121 sent to service. Into the Night Refuges for Men and Women of Character 258 men had been admitted, of whom 78 had been provided with situations by the Institution. Of the 618 women received, 86 had been sent to service, 85 had obtained other work, 63 had been sent to homes, 15 returned to friends, and 35 put into the Servants' Training Home. The average attendance at the Ragged Church had been 413, and at the Children's Church, 50. At the Bible Schools the attendances had been very large; often over 1,000 children had assembled. A band of 90 voluntary teachers taught these masses. The numerous other smaller philanthropic agencies, such as the Maternal Society, the Mothers' Sewing Class, the Crêche, the Penny Bank, the Parents' Church, &c., were flourishing.

The meeting was addressed by Revs. J. Fleming, J. Panckridge, T. H. Tarlton, W. C. Van Meter, and Messrs. R. Baxter, J. Macgregor, and E. J. Hytche.

Papers, Original and Selected.

SOCIAL HINDRANCES TO RAGGED SCHOOLS.

PART II.

In our May number (p. 97) we referred to some of the many social obstacles to the complete success of Ragged Schools. Three of these hindrances—namely, drunkenness, dolly-shops, and bad homes—were shown to originate in adults, mostly their parents, and to have had a sad reflex influence on our scholars.

But, black as was the list of these social hindrances, the catalogue was not exhausted; and when we review the whole of these social obstacles wonder is excited that Ragged Schools have not failed altogether, instead of their records being marked by such brilliant results. The fact that, in spite of open foes and false friends, Christianity has outlived all opposition, has been indicated as an indisputable proof of its Divine origin. May we not, then, use the same argument, and ask that if, notwithstanding the mistakes of their promoters and the open hostility of others, Ragged Schools show every sign of vitality—does not that fact supply no slight evidence that they have been as beneficial in practice as they were right in aim?

A notice of a few more social hindrances will complete our survey of evils which have operated as antagonists to our principles as well as our plans from the very outset of our movement.

I. Thieves' Magazines.

It is notorious that with an increase in the number of those who have acquired the art of reading, there has been a corresponding increase in the circulation of criminal literature. Even the higher circles of society are not free from this vitiated taste, as the popularity of such novels as "Paul Clifford," "Eugene Aram," &c., too fully prove. But as we descend the social scale this evil becomes intensified. For what one class reads to excite a *blasé* appetite, the other gloats over as practical lessons in the art of investing crime with the air of romance. Tens of thousands of such serials as the following, whose titles we lately copied, are

sold weekly—namely, "Dick Turpin; or, the Ride to York;" "Claude Duval, the Highwayman;" "Adventures of Sixteen-string Jack;" "Newgate Calendar;" and "Tales of Pirates." In all these romances vice and crime are painted in the most alluring colours. Petted by beautiful females, living in Belgravian luxury, and always wealthy and brilliant, the hero is the envy of other thieves. It is rare, too, that he is not able to circumvent the ablest detective; and, if haply, in some housebreaking expedition, he is led to commit murder wholesale, then he is represented as ascending the gallows with a lordly gait, and to die "game!" To such seductive pictures even the children of the middle class have succumbed. Can we, then, wonder that the child of poverty finds it difficult to resist such temptations, sown as they now are broadcast?

To put the fact of the enormous sale of such periodicals beyond a doubt, the "Religious Book Society of Scotland" last year requested its colporteurs to investigate the subject. What was their report? The entries in their report are usually as follows:—"Sold to a very great extent;" "the lower classes who are able to read almost all read them;" "number sold very large;" "they have a great sale, and wide circulation;" "great numbers;" "a very great amount sold;" "they are found in almost every house in the district, except in the houses of God's children;" "the country people, with few exceptions, read them." The total aggregate sold it is not easy accurately to ascertain; but, from the statements made, the inference is inevitable that the aggregate number must be very large indeed, amounting to tens of thousands weekly over the land. In one country district it was found that the number amounted to between two or three hundred weekly; and in another upwards of three hundred; while in city districts the numbers are vastly larger.

But what is true of Scotland is not less a correct photograph of London and other large cities. If any one doubts the fact, let him visit the byways of the New Cut and the Borough, and glance at the windows of the newsvendors, and he will speedily judge what is the staple of the literature of the district. Rarely will he see a copy of the "British Workman" exposed for sale, whilst the foulest trash—as well song as romance—ever vomited out of the bottomless pit will meet his eye in every direction. But let him not forget to watch the class of customers who buy this

moral sewage, and he will see mere infants thronging these shops, not unfrequently clubbing their farthings, in order to gloat over scenes of vice and crime which make one's very flesh creep, and fill one with dismay as to the future of England.

No wonder, then, when vice is fed in this way, that juvenile crime is not extinct; one ought rather to wonder that any escape this moral contagion, which, thanks to Ragged Schools, so many thousands do. Yet it will be seen what a powerful social hindrance to our schools is thieves' literature; and, unless something is done to supersede such vile by purer serials, the art of reading will become a national curse rather than a blessing.

II. Love of Dress.

To dress for show, rather than for use or comfort, has been a sin, especially in females, in all ages. Thus Isaiah, when denouncing the sins of God's chosen people, indicates over-dress as one of the national sins. Yet, alas! no one can read Isa. iii. 16—23, without seeing a photograph of the present age—an age when even mere girls imitate Jezebel and *paint!*

Nor does this sin show any signs of decrease, but rather it seems to increase day by day. It is true that coals and food are at almost famine prices; but mere dress, showy if not lasting, is cheaper than ever. And thus poor vain girls are led away by the prevalent taste, and the annals of our Magdalen asylums show the terrible penalty. The mothers of poor girls unhappily are the first in this outrage on common sense. We have remonstrated with hundreds of girls for wearing beads, earrings, or crosses; and in almost every case they have replied that their "mothers say they *shall* wear them!" On more than one occasion, indeed, these poor girls have said that "mother says I shall catch cold if I take off my necklace!" In order, too, that they may strut about on Sundays with a staring red, green, or blue feather in their hats, many are dinnerless; their foolish, if not wicked mothers, preferring to spend in tawdry finery what had better have been spent on food. We need scarcely add that such girls are as remarkable for dirt and squalor as they are for ornament—neatness and cleanliness generally being united.

The only gleam of light we can trace in this dark and darkening picture is the "Women's Dress Association" which has just been founded by some influential ladies. The following are the

rules of this valuable society:—"1. Every member and associate must engage to dress modestly, neatly, and becomingly, the dress to be consistent with the occupation and position in life, and that cleanliness be scrupulously observed. 2. Never to buy anything merely because it is cheap, nor without paying for purchases at the time or when the account is sent in, and never to spend more upon dress than can be conscientiously spared for the purpose. 3. To avoid all waste of time in frequent changes or alterations of dress, and that dress or dressing shall in no respect whatever be permitted to infringe upon other and higher duties. 4. To avoid all exaggerations (*especially of head-dresses*), and however they may be encouraged by the popular fashion, all unsightly articles of dress which interfere with the natural figure, or anything which might attract improper attention. 5. No member or associate to wear any unhealthy style of dress (such as tight-lacing, high heels, poisonous materials, &c.), or anything which cripples natural action or exercise."

We trust that this new movement will prove successful, for, as the lower class of females are prone to imitate, if not to caricature, those of a superior social grade, we may hope that as the higher learn to dress simply and neatly, so will their less favoured sisters. But till then, and not till then, we shall have to indicate the present dressiness of females as no slight social hindrance to the success of Ragged Schools.

III. Street Gambling.

Among the many social vices which now prevail, none has grown so rapidly of late as that of gambling. First and foremost is the present rage for horse-racing, in which so many of the aristocracy set a lamentable example; notwithstanding that about ten peers and very many "honourables" have become bankrupt through betting. Hence, in the Night Refuge attached to a Ragged School, we have met several men who once moved in a high social sphere, who, ruined by this vice, have been glad to herd with casuals and other outcasts whom they would once have scorned to notice. Unhappily, Parliament has given a national sanction to this vice by voting thirty "Queen's Plates" of the value of £100 each to various races in England and Ireland. In addition to this, the highest class newspapers devote a column or two daily to races, most paying a "prophet" to foretell the winning horse in any great race yet to be run.

Nor are our scholars unaffected by this form of gambling. It would, for example, be a sheer waste of time to visit any southern Ragged Night School during Epsom races; for those who have not trudged there to sell fusees or beg throng the road, to see the half-drunk and half-mad betting men and their dupes on their return from the Derby.

Nor is this the only form of gambling which affects our scholars. What a bet on a race is to those who are flush of money, so is "tossing" to lads of a lower social grade. Groups of such lads may usually be seen, even on Sunday, in Pye Street, Westminster, in Kent Street, or the waste ground of Farringdon Road. This form of gambling creates idleness, if it does not become a school of thieving. It, in fact, makes excitement such a matter of necessity that quiet regular labour is out of the question.

Need we say, then, that gambling in all its forms—whether in the incipient stage of tossing, or the more mature one of betting—is a powerful social hindrance to the success of Ragged Schools. For what is taught in the school is *un*-taught at home or in the streets, and very many are too morally weak to resist such a powerful temptation.

A review of these hindrances to Ragged Schools suggests this question, Where would society be if such potent social evils had not the check of our schools? Bad as is the state of large sections of society, they would be infinitely worse were it not for the efforts of those men and women who, with true Christian heroism, hesitate not to enter byway and hovel if haply they may save some of God's lambs.

But whilst these facts supply powerful reasons why we should not abandon our mission, they equally include a pressing call upon those who are still "standing idle in the market-place" to engage at once in this struggle with social vice and misery. For if we have done so much with scanty means and a too limited number of agents, we may infer what would have been effected if those who are now content merely to sit in their pews on Sundays and drink in Gospel consolation, had descended into the arena and battled with these human wild beasts. When this is done by the Church as one man, then it will be seen that Ragged Schools are equal to cope with every social hindrance; and thus by the blessing of the Most High they will help in the great work of winning the world for Jesus?

UNIVERSAL PRAYER FOR RAGGED AND SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

In response to many appeals, the Committees of the Ragged School Union and of the Sunday School Union have resolved to invite their fellow-teachers throughout the world to unite annually in special prayer.

The 19th and 20th of October have been fixed upon for this year, and the Committees suggest that the following order should as far as possible be observed.

1. On Lord's-day morning, October 19th, between seven and eight, all teachers should engage in private prayer for God's blessing on their labours.

2. In the afternoon the ordinary routine of each school should be varied by the children being gathered for devotional exercises; interspersed with appropriate addresses. To this meeting the parents of the scholars might be invited.

3. At some time during the evening the teachers should meet to implore Divine help and guidance.

4. On Monday morning, October 20th, between seven and eight, all teachers should again bring their scholars in prayer before God.

5. In the course of the day the female teachers of each school should hold a meeting for prayer.

6. In the evening each Church should be invited to hold a special prayer meeting, at which the welfare of the Sunday School should form the theme of the prayers and addresses.

Teachers of Ragged and Sunday Schools in all parts of the world are affectionately invited to unite their supplications at these times.

Appropriate topics for supplication and intercession will readily present themselves to all. But above everything, the prayers should be for a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit, imparting to the teachers heavenly wisdom, to the scholars docility and seriousness; enkindling the deeper interest of the churches in the work; and leading, as the happy result, to a large ingathering of the young into the fold of Christ.

By such united and earnest prayer we shall comply with the injunction of the Holy Spirit:—

"Arise, cry out in the night: in the beginning of the watches

pour out thine heart like water before the face of the Lord: lift up thine hands toward him for the life of thy young children, that faint for hunger in the top of every street."—*Lamentations* ii. 19.

COLOMBO RAGGED SCHOOL.

WHEREVER there is a large population there is invariably found a large number, old and young, who are sunk in poverty and misery, if not living by positive crime. It was for the social and spiritual benefit of these classes that Ragged Schools were originally designed; and their success shows that Christian kindness can tame the worst and open a door of hope for the most desponding.

Their success in England has led most European capitals to copy the precedent. Thus there are flourishing Ragged Schools in Madrid and Rome. Even in the far East, there are Ragged Schools—those in Cairo and Lucknow being most successful. Still farther East, Colombo, the capital of Ceylon, has copied the English system; even retaining the time-honoured name. This Ragged School was established in 1845; under the auspices of some most influential friends of education. In this school, the children of the poorest are taught the simplest elements, that truest base of sound education, the Christian faith, being prominent. The boys, too, are taught trades, and the girls needlework. Each child has a good meal once a day.

This Ragged School owes much of its success to the persevering labour of Mrs. Carver, the wife of the Registrar of the Supreme Court of Ceylon. From the outset she has directed the working of the Girls' School; and last year forty were clothed by her kindness.

An original feature in this school deserves notice. As in England, so in Ceylon, it is found that much of the success of Ragged Schools depends upon the personal interest shown by those of a higher social grade in our social waifs and strays. In order, then, to induce persons of influence to speak to and seek for these wayfarers individually, they are invited to send candidates; paying three shillings per month for their food, &c. It is pleasing to know that many have thus been led to speak to and help the helpless out of the social gutter.

The following extracts from the Visitors' book for 1872, show how satisfactory is the conduct and the training of these children of neglect, and how well they repay the kindness of their benefactor: "Feb. 20th.—Bishop of Colombo: 'School well taught and attendance very good.'" "July 8th.—Mrs. Temple: 'Good attendance, children much improved. The head class read very well, and seem to understand the meaning of words.'" "Oct. 26th.—Mrs. Layard heard the first class read, spell, and repeat the multiplication table, and found them greatly improved."

Notwithstanding the fiery trial to which the British Ragged Schools have been recently exposed, we do not think that they are likely to collapse

—in other words, to die the *un*-natural death of starvation. But, were there any fear of their extinction in the west, it is pleasing to find that the eastern hemisphere bids fair to preserve the system intact. There, as here, Ragged Schools have served to knit classes widely separate, and thus practically to recognise the Biblical truth, that "God made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth."

LITTLE DICK, THE SHOEBLACK.

Chapter II.—The Sick Room.

It was on one cold, dark afternoon, a little before Christmas, that Evelyn's poor little favourite might be seen in his old street corner. He was looking paler and more worn, and the bright black eyes were sunk deep in their sockets. Dick had indeed tried his best that day to earn a few pence, but many people did not venture out because of the cold; and those whose business forced them to leave their houses, were too much occupied to notice him. All he had received amounted to only twopence. Chilled and downcast he slung his box over his shoulder, and wended his way through dark narrow streets until he came to his own wretched home.

It was quite dark, although but just four o'clock, from the thick fog. His mother had heard his footstep and was at the door to greet him. "Oh!" she said, "how glad I am that you have come. Your father has been brought home to-day very bad, and I have been wanting you to run for the doctor. But, oh! how starved you look, Dick; come in for a bit and warm yourself as best you can. Tell me, have you earned anything to-day?"

"Not much, mother, only twopence," and so saying the poor little fellow burst into tears.

"Oh, don't cry, child. I am sure you have done your best. We must think now of your poor father, and get the doctor here as soon as we can; and then you shall go to bed, for you do indeed look quite worn out."

That night Dick could not sleep; he felt racking pains in all his limbs, which increased hour by hour, though he was too unselfish to make any complaint. The next morning he tried to rise, but found he was unable to do so.

"Surely," thought he, "I am not going to be ill too, for then we must all starve."

"Mother!" he cried, "will you help me to get up." His mother came to his side, and was greatly alarmed to find, on touching him, that he was in a burning fever. Days passed by and Dick became worse. Their funds were quite exhausted, and they had parted with all the little furniture they possessed. Dick was now often delirious, and in his wanderings would talk about his "dear young lady." His mother, however, thought this but some strange fancy at the time; although afterwards she had good cause to remember it.

CHAPTER III.—RESCUED.

WE will now return to Evelyn and her party, who had come home again to pass the Christmas in London.

"I do wonder," said Evelyn one evening, "what can have become of little Dick. I look out for him every day, but never can see him now."

"I wish that we could hear something of him," said her mamma, looking up from her work.

"So do I too," said Lisa. "But papa, what time are you going to-night?"

"It is time for me to start now; so run, Evelyn, and see if my cab has come."

As Evelyn was closing the door a little ragged boy ran up the steps, crying, "Oh miss, miss! the little shoeblack you were so kind to is dying."

"Dying?" said Evelyn.

"Yes, miss, that he is; dying of the fever."

"Mamma," she cried, bursting into her mother's room, "a little boy has just told me that Dick is dying. May I go and see him?"

"Certainly not, my dear; Stephens shall go and see if it be really true."

It was too late that night for anything to be done; but early the next day Stephens was sent to see into the truth of the story.

Let us now return to our poor little sufferer. Nourishing food was absolutely necessary to save his life, and this the unfortunate mother was unable to provide. He had been ill for three weeks, and no favourable change had taken place; and now he seemed to be lying at death's door, too weak to move hand or foot.

"Mother dear," he said one morning, "I sometimes think, as I lie here, that God is going to take me."

"Oh, Dick, you must not talk like that; it breaks my heart. I somehow feel that help will come, and that God will spare your life, so precious to me and to us all."

She had scarcely spoken when a knock was heard at the door. The mother went to open it, and was surprised to see a stranger, for the face, so familiar to little Dick, was quite unknown to her. She, however, civilly asked him to walk in—and who can describe the joy of the child when he recognised the servant of the dear young lady, and to find she had indeed remembered him, even after so long an absence! From that time our readers may guess that little Dick was allowed to want nothing that could conduce to his recovery. By slow degrees his health was restored, and in time Evelyn had the satisfaction of seeing him arrive, leaning upon his mother's arm, to return thanks himself for the kindness that he had received. When he was able to get about again he was often permitted to run errands for the servants, and occasionally to clean boots for the family outside the area railings. On these occasions he was quick to mark those that belonged to "his young lady," and never could be induced to take his penny for that pair, "too pleased," as he said, "to render her even this small service."

When help was afterwards required in the house, Dick was hired to assist below-stairs; and he became a general favourite. After some little difficulty a suitable situation was found for Evelyn's charge, now fourteen years of age; and a clean, bright-looking lad he was, too, when, on his way to his place, he came to show himself, in his new clothes, which *all* had helped to provide; his boots, and many other useful little articles, having been presented by the upper servants.

It is now two years since Dick was started in life in the manner I have described. His employers have had cause to be so well satisfied with him that, from time to time, his wages have been raised, and he is now in a position to give the help so much needed at home.

My readers, perhaps, may be interested to hear that Evelyn and Lisa have returned to their country home, welcomed on all sides by the many friends they had left behind, and revelling in all the delights which a real country life affords to those who know how to appreciate them. Surely it must be a satisfaction to them, as they look back to their sojourn in London, so distasteful to them at the time, to remember that the cloud, which seemed to them so dark, had indeed a "silver lining" for little Dick.

WINDOW GARDENING IN WESTMINSTER.

THE eighth annual flower show of the united parishes of St. Margaret and St. John was recently held in the College Garden, Great College Street, with a success which was clearly attested by a crowded attendance. The exertions of Lady Augusta Stanley, in the interests of the Society for Promoting Window Gardening among the Working Classes of this district, have been pursued with an energy which has excited the attention of a number of influential ladies and gentlemen, a large contingent of whom were present. There was also a strong muster of the classes most interested in the show and the fate of the competitors for prizes.

The flowers were tastefully arranged in two parallel rows down the centre of a long marquee. The exhibits presented a very good show, and did great credit to their cultivators, especially considering the crowded population, and foul and dingy atmosphere amid which some of the best specimens were grown. The exertions of the exhibitors had been directed principally to the cultivation of fuchsias and geraniums, some excellent specimens of which were awarded prominent prizes by an umpire from the Horticultural Society. The competition was divided into three classes, the first being for working men or women; the second for children in local Ragged or National Schools; and the last for the inmates of the parish workhouses and Westminster Hospital.

The prize-winners were directed to attend at half-past six, and about that hour Lord Shaftesbury proceeded, as on many former occasions, to distribute the awards, consisting of handsomely-bound books, together with sums of money ranging from 6s. to 1s. 6d. On the termination of the

distribution, his lordship proceeded to deliver a brief address, in the course of which he drew the attention of his hearers to the fact that what they had seen that afternoon was a striking instance of the good which accrued from these flower shows. He had known Westminster for the past forty years, during which period such great improvement had taken place in it that he hardly recognised the place as it appeared to him of old. Its inhabitants, he thought, were deserving of good care, and he was sure that the resident clergymen exerted themselves energetically in their behalf. It was, however, to be deplored that there had been a falling off in these shows in other parts of the metropolis, for the love of flowers was inherent in human nature, and raised it to a state of high culture—a fact which, he trusted, would be an inducement to them to continue their cultivation of plants. A vote of thanks to the Chairman, moved by Dean Stanley, and seconded by the Rev. W. Conway, of St. Margaret's, having been unanimously carried, three hearty cheers were given for his lordship, the Dean, and Lady A. Stanley.

The success of this flower show suggests the inquiry, Why is there not a similar exhibition in every parish in London? For if flowers *can* grow amid the smoke and grime of Westminster, surely there is no part of London where they cannot grow into fullest beauty. Of the social benefits of such flower shows there can be no doubt. By adorning the humblest home they tend to make it a happy one; and thereby to wean many from those sensual pleasures which ruin so many of the labouring class body and soul.

RAGGED SCHOOL UNION CHILDREN'S EXCURSION.

THE recurring season has brought with it the usual number of appeals in the press on behalf of the children of our towns enjoying a day in the "green fields."

In some cases the petitions have been supplemented by a leading article. We cull the following extracts from an excellent notice which appeared in the *Daily News*. "It would be a mistake to suppose that these excursions are greatly enhanced by the normal dulness of the children's lives. At the charitable schools of late years the old principle of stupid repression and severe discipline has been steadily discouraged, or entirely abandoned. Instead of the wretched youngsters being put into the ugliest of uniforms and forbidden the use of toys, in fact, being subjected to a prison system, there is a strong reaction in favour of gratifying instead of starving the natural instincts of children for recreation and sympathy. They are no longer so rigidly drilled as to seem on show occasions to possess no more individuality than a herd of cattle. From this it may be inferred that the schools are not abodes of gloom or tribulation for the youngsters. Yet, as a matter of course, the majority of such institutions—the most active and valuable of them—are in the thickest and poorest parts

of London. They are in the midst of the smoke and of the houses. Their working rooms and playgrounds, if any, are almost necessarily confined and dull. When the children arrive home after school they return to these stifling chambers, or lodgings, or rookeries, which are responsible for so many weak limbs, pallid faces, and broken constitutions amongst the people of the eastern parishes. When the Temple Gardens have been thrown open, the rush made at them, even by the young folk of the neighbourhood and as far off as the purlieus of Holborn, is wonderful. The manner in which St. James's Park is similarly utilised is a practical proof also of the appreciation of a grass plot of any kind by the uncared-for and unkempt Arabs of the streets."

Referring to the Ragged Schools particularly, it is found that a few, owing to the poverty of the district or the supineness of the local friends, have no prospect of participating in this desirable merrymaking. Hence it is that the Union has made a special effort for some years past to give the children of these Schools a treat in common with the rest. Hearty thanks are due to generous friends for again kindly responding to Lord Shaftesbury's annual appeal.

On Friday, August 1st, upwards of 1,400 children, accompanied by their teachers, were conveyed to Bushey Park and Hampton Court Palace. The South Western Railway took the South London detachments; the North London Railway picked up others at Broad Street, Shoreditch, and Camden Town Stations, and some from the outlying Schools were conveyed by vans. Dark clouds, and two or three heavy showers in the morning, threatened to mar the day's pleasure. Happily these cleared off at mid-day, and the weather then became all that could be desired. To say that the children heartily enjoyed the treat conveys but a faint idea of the happy zest and hilarity which prevailed. This animation probably reached its climax when some hundreds of toys were distributed. The exultation and noise from the trumpets, whistles, rattles, &c., was quite deafening. A substantial tea was given early in the afternoon, and quantities of fruit scattered amongst the little ones. The spirits of the children showed no signs of flagging as the vans were packed for the return journey, and the line formed for marching to Teddington Station. It was somewhat late before all the children reached London. When rest was sought it was with grateful hearts for the safe return, and pleasant memories of the happiness enjoyed.

SCHOLARS' PRIZES FOR 1873.

THE Committee of the Ragged School Union, being desirous to encourage good conduct and long-continued service in all who have passed through the Schools of the Union, have again decided on giving prizes to young persons who have kept their situations with good character for twelve months or upwards, and coming within the following conditions, viz.:—

1. They must be over twelve and under eighteen years of age.

2. They must have attended the Ragged School giving the recommendation at least six months previously to having entered their first situation.

3. Having kept one situation for twelve months, they are allowed to make one change, but must not be out of place for more than two weeks; in this case they are eligible for the prize, provided they are in the second place December 31st, 1873. Certificates of character will be required from both situations.

4. For the first year the prize shall consist of seven shillings and sixpence, and a card, provided the committee of the school recommending pay two shillings and sixpence of it.

5. Those who have received a money prize previously, and are again recommended, will be entitled to a prize card and a book in value of not less than two shillings and sixpence.

6. They must have been in regular attendance at the Ragged or other Sunday School for the current year. This rule does not apply to *female* domestic servants.

7. Shoeblacks, occasional labourers, scholars partially employed, those engaged by their relatives, or girls working in jute, cartridge, and similar factories, or earning more than ten shillings per week, are not eligible for the prizes.

8. Certificates must be furnished by the employers and school authorities, to show that these conditions have been complied with, and that good conduct has been continued to December 31st, 1873.

9. The candidate will lose the benefit that might arise from this application, unless all the questions be definitely answered and the certificates fully and accurately filled up, duly signed, and returned to the Office, 1, Exeter Hall, on or before January 15, 1874.

The prizes may be given in books, clothes, or otherwise, as the committee of the school may determine.

1, *Exeter Hall, August*, 1873. JOSEPH G. GENT, *Secretary*.

I LIVE NOT FOR MYSELF.

A PARABLE.

"I LIVE not alone for myself," said a beautiful flower one fair morning as it lifted to the sun its crest sparkling with dewdrops. "I live not alone for myself. Mortals come and gaze on me, and breathe my fragrance, and go away better than they came; for I minister to their perceptions of the beautiful; I give to the bee his honey, and to the insect his food; I help to clothe the earth in beauty."

"I live not alone for myself," said a wide-spreading tree; "I give a happy home to a hundred living insects; I grant support to the living tendrils of the vine; I absorb the noxious vapours in the air; I spread a welcome shadow for man and beast; and I, too, help to make the earth beautiful."

"I live not alone for myself," said a laughing mountain streamlet. "I know that my tribute to the ocean is small, but still I am hastening to carry it there. And I try to do all the good I can on my way. The trees and the flowers love my banks, for I give them life and nourishment; and even the grass, which feels my influence, has a greener hue. The minnows find life and happiness in my waters, though I glide onward only as a silver thread; and men and animals seek my brink to assuage their thirst and enjoy the shadow of the trees which I nourish. I live not alone for myself."

"I live not alone for myself," said a bright-hued bird, as he soared upward into the air. "My songs are a blessing to man. I have seen the poor man sad and despondent as he went home from his daily work, for he knew not how to obtain food for his little ones. Then I tuned one of my sweetest lays for his ear, and he looked upward, saying, 'Behold the fowls of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet my Heavenly Father feedeth them. Am not I better than they?' and the look of gloom changed to one of cheerfulness and hope."

"I live not wholly for myself" should be the language of every reflecting mind. It is the language based on love to Jesus; and so guiding to the only paths of happiness on earth, and preparing the soul for unalloyed bliss throughout the measureless enduring of eternity. E.

Poet's Corner.

BEYOND THE STARS.

Beyond the stars that shine in golden glory,
Beyond the calm sweet moon,
Up the bright ladder saints have trod before thee,
Soul! thou shalt venture soon.
Secure with Him who sees thy heart-sick yearning,
Safe in Christ's arms of love,
Thou shalt exchange the midnight for the morning,
And thy fair home above.

O! it is sweet to watch the world's night wearing,
The Sabbath morn come on:
If sweet it is the vineyard's labour sharing—
Far sweeter labour done.
All finished!—all—the conflict and the sorrow
Earth's dream of anguish o'er;
Deathless there dawns for thee a nightless morrow
On Eden's blissful shore.

Then bow thine head, and God shall give thee meekness,
Bravely to do His will;
So shall arise His glory in thy weakness—
Oh, struggling soul be still!

Dark clouds are His pavilion shining o'er thee ;
Thine heart must recognise
The veiled Shechinah moving on before thee,
Too bright to meet thine eyes.

Behold the wheel that straightly moves, and fleetly
Performs the Sov'reign Word ;
Thou know'st His suffering love? then, suff'ring meekly,
Follow thy loving Lord !
Watch on the tower, and listen by the gateway,
Nor weep to wait alone ;
Take thou thy spices, and some angel straightway
Shall roll away the stone.

So at the grave's dark portal thou may'st linger,
And hymn some happy strain :
The passing world may mock the feeble singer—
Heed not, but sing again.
Thus work, thus watch, till He the last link sever,
And changeless rest be won.
Then in His glory thou shalt bask for ever.
Fear not the clouds—PRESS ON !

Teachers' Column.

SYSTEMATIC BIBLE TEACHING.

On Sunday evening, July 20th, an examination was held for the purpose of testing the progress of the scholars of the King Edward Ragged Schools and the girls of the Albert Street Refuge, in the first twelve lessons of what is termed the Hints and Helps System of Teaching, as published in the January, February, and March numbers of the "Systematic Bible Teacher," by Mr. Green, a monthly penny magazine (Partridge and Co.). There were present H. R. Williams, Esq., treasurer, J. H. Lloyd, Esq., hon. sec., and Messrs. J. G. Gent and Curtis, &c., &c.

Mr. Green, author of the system of teaching referred to, conducted the examination. Here we must premise that barely a month of one hour a week was devoted to the lessons provided for an entire quarter of a year. On opening the proceedings Mr. Green said : The schools laboured under considerable disadvantage from several causes. On the 22nd June, when the first lesson was given, nearly one-third were shut out, and so lost the first lesson. On the second Sunday, June 29th, the pouring rain kept many away, who consequently lost that lesson. While of those who attended on the third Sunday, July 6th, some had had one set of lessons, and some two ; and the fourth Sunday, July 13th, while the heat was so intense, the room was literally crammed, on account of the distribution of tickets for the annual treat the following Tuesday. These proved great hindrances to the progress of all ; so that what they knew had been taught them in little more than three Sunday evenings.

Addressing the scholars Mr. Green said : There is an awful verse in the Bible—very awful, at which we need all to tremble, and I wish to impress this on all our minds to-night. It is in the 9th Psalm, 17th verse. The verse is,

"The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." Thousands of people forget Him, without knowing that truth. I ask you now, do you remember how we said we might keep the thought of God in our hearts? I think we decided that if we said a grace before every meal—say, at least, three times a day, making twenty-one times each week, that would be a help. Do you remember what that grace was?—Children: Yes, sir. "Bless me, O Lord, and let my food strengthen me, to serve Thee for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen."

Mr. Green: Have any of you used it since that time? If you have, you may hold up the hand.—In response several hands were held up.

Mr. Green next asked them whether they remembered the morning prayer taught them?—The girls of the Refuge repeated the prayer in a most satisfactory manner as follows: "Almighty God, the Maker of every thing in heaven and earth; the darkness goes away, and the daylight comes at Thy command: Thou art good, and Thou doest good continually. I thank Thee that Thou hast taken such care of me this night, and that I am alive and well this morning. Save me, O Lord, from evil all this day long, and let me love and serve Thee for ever, for the sake of Jesus Christ Thy Son. Amen."

The hymn, "This is the day when Christ arose," &c., was then repeated, and sung to tune Old Winchester. The first two verses by all the scholars, the last two by the Ragged School only. Mr. Green then repeated a prayer for the help of the Holy Spirit, entitled, "Silent Prayer." Thus: "Most merciful, and gracious Lord Jesus! I pray thee, send down the Holy Spirit now, into my heart, that I may think of Thee, learn about Thee, love and please Thee, in all school duties this evening; and Thou shalt have the glory, for ever and ever. Amen."

The verse, "How glorious is our heavenly king," was repeated by all, and the following questions were asked by Mr. Green, and answered by the girls of the Refuge:—Who was Adam?—The first man that God made, and the father of us all. Who was Eve?—The first woman, and she was the mother of us all. Who was Cain?—Adam's eldest son, and he killed his brother Abel.

Mr. Green next asked: Can you tell me now who made you?—The great God who made heaven and earth.

After which the key-note only was given, and the whole schools then sung the hymn (tune, St. Magnus), "How glorious is our heavenly king." After which the verse, commencing, "I sing the almighty power of God" (tune, French) was repeated, and sung by all. Mr. Green remarking, "That the beauty of the singing lay in the fact that he could not tell who was the leader, all commencing at once with only the key-note."

Mr. Green asked, What doth God do for you?

This was answered correctly by all the children.

Mr. Green: Do you think we always deserve it?—The children: No, sir.

Mr. Green: Then what must you do for this great God, that is so good to you?—Children: I must learn to know Him first, and then I must do everything to please Him.

Mr. Green remarked that if all carried out the principle embodied therein, there would be no need of policemen and jails.

The questions were asked: What was Abel? Who was Enoch? What must you do to please God?

The answers having been given by the children, Mr. Green asked, Who was Noah?—Answer given: The good man who was saved when the world was drowned.

Mr. Green: If only a boy is drowned what an ado; if a man is drowned it is in all the papers. But what do you say—the whole world?—The children: Yes, sir.

Mr. Green: Because it was so wicked. Some say God won't punish sin. Does that look like it?—No.

Mr. Green: Don't you risk it.

The children then repeated the verse commencing, "Blest be the wisdom and the power."

Mr. Green next asked, Who was Job? Who was Abraham? Who was Isaac? What must you do for this great God, who is so good to you? All of which were answered by the children most satisfactorily.

The children having sung the verse commencing, "Whene'er I take my walks abroad," Mr. Green remarked that he thought none of the children knew the tune a month before.

The catechism was then proceeded with, Mr. Green asking, Where does God teach us to know and please Him? What was Sarah? Who was Jacob? What was Israel?—which were all answered in a most pleasing manner.

This was followed by the singing of the names of the books of the Bible, at the request of Mr. Williams.

The verse commencing "Lord, how delightful 'tis to see," &c., was next repeated and sung. The girls of the Refuge then repeated the evening prayer, "O most gracious God, let me never forget the many good things which I have heard this day; but let them abide in my heart so as to amend my life, that I may be able to give a good account of them to Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, when He comes to judge the world at the last day. Amen." At which Mr. Williams expressed himself much pleased. This was followed by the repetition of the verse commencing "Great God, to Thee my voice I raise," by all the children, Mr. Green remarking that the girls of the Refuge had had no books.

Mr. Green then asked, Who was Joseph? Who were the twelve Patriarchs? Who was Pharaoh?—all of which were correctly answered.

The first verse of another hymn commencing "Lord, I ascribe it to Thy grace," was next repeated by the children.

The following questions were then asked and answered, What must you do to please God? Who was Moses? Who was Aaron? Who were the priests? Mr. Green expressing the pleasure it gave him to find the children had obtained by this means such an insight into the Bible.

The children having repeated the verse commencing "Great God, to Thee my voice I raise," Mr. Green asked, What is your duty to God? Upon the children giving the answer Mr. Green remarked, "What a good thing it would be if all men did their duty to God."

Mr. Green then proceeded to catechise as follows: Who was Joshua? Who was Samson? Who was Eli?

The answer to this latter question having been given, Mr. Green said: Children think their parents very hard sometimes when they whip them well. But here is the case of a good man with whom God was angry because he had some wicked sons, and Eli did not keep them from wickedness.

The children next repeated and sang the verse commencing, "The praises of my tongue," &c.

Mr. Green: Do you remember the prophet whom God called when a child?—The children: Samuel.

The next question, Who were the prophets? was followed by, Who was David? The children next repeated and sang the verse commencing, "Almighty God, Thy piercing eye." The next four verses having been sung, Mr. Green asked, What is your duty to man?—the answer to which was given by all.

The following questions were then answered:—What good do you hope for by seeking to please God? Who was Goliath? Who was Absalom? Who was Solomon?

The children next repeated and sung the verse commencing, "There is a God that reigns above." The following verse having been sung:—

"There is an hour when I must die,
Nor do I know how soon 'twill come,
A thousand children, young as I,
Are called by death to hear their doom."

Mr. Green said: "I wonder what yours will be? I wonder what mine will be? I can tell you, children; I have no hope but in Jesus; but I know He is able to save me, and only He can save any one. If we can only get all our eyes on Jesus our dying hour will not be the worst."

Mr. Green then asked, "And what if you do not fear God nor love Him, nor seek to please Him? Why should you be afraid of God's anger? Who was Elisha? Who was Gehazi?"

Mr. Green: Who struck Gehazi?—The children: God.

Mr. Green: What for?—The children: For telling a lie.

Mr. Green: What a mercy it is that God did not strike all who have told a lie! Oh, children, you need be aware of lying. The Lord is angry with it.

Who was Jonah? asked Mr. Green.

The answer having been given, Mr. Green said: He was a disobedient man. The Lord said, "Go to Nineveh." Jonah said, "I, I go to Tarshish." He said he would run away from God. Do you think he could do that?—The children: No.

Mr. Green: Don't you try to run away from God. If you have done wrong come and confess it.

The children next repeated and sang the hymn commencing, "There is a home beyond the sky."

This was followed by the hymn commencing, "Happy the child whose younger years," which was repeated and sung by the children.

Mr. Green then asked: But have you never done anything to make God angry with you already?—which was readily answered by all, as was also the next question: What do you mean by sinning against God? The children having answered the next question: How do you know that you have a soul? Mr. Green brought the examination to a conclusion by asking, Who was Daniel?

Mr. Gent, Secretary of the Ragged School Union, said: I have been sitting here now for an hour and a half, and rather more than an hour I have spent in listening to your replies to the questions put to you, and I can only say to you that I go home with a lighter heart and happier spirit than I came, because I think some real good has been done among you during the past three or four Sundays' teaching—special good—good that I think you will long remember—good that I think will make a lasting impression on your minds, and I trust and pray that the impression may go deeper and rest upon your hearts too. We will not detain you longer. It is warm, and the time has come when we must separate. But I hope the time will come when I shall meet you again, and I hope what you have commenced and done so well will be carried on to a far greater extent, and, depend upon it, *you* will derive all the advantage.

Addressing the teachers Mr. Gent said: I have been afraid of one thing which I should like to mention. I mention it because I want if I can to prevent what I think may take place. It is this: if Mr. Green were to go on teaching in this way Sunday after Sunday, I am afraid some of our excellent good friends who have been doing the work so well and so long will begin to think, "Oh Mr. Green can do it without me." No, it is God you serve, not Mr. Green—God requiring you to do His work, and He has sent you into His vineyard to do it. Don't retreat. Do not think that others are going to supersede you: the work will become of more importance day by day, and year by year, as time rolls on. I fear I see dark times ahead, difficulties coming in relation to religious teaching and Bible instruction. I hope the cloud may pass over and not break upon us; much depends on you, very much, whether

the darkness shall increase. Keep to your work, my friends, my brothers, my sisters, as long as God permits you; work on faithfully to the end, and then He will say to you, as I hope He may say to me, "It is enough; come up hither."

Mr. Green: The friends should know this is but the first half of the first division of this teaching, and properly belongs to an earlier stage of life. It is so important all should know it, that it should not be passed over. Then as touching the work, if we have given you over three months' work in three weeks, that will not dispense with your work. I hope I shall have some conversation with the teachers before long, when I shall be able to throw some light upon it.

To the children: Have any of your mothers been singing it with you? Two hands were held up. Have any of your fathers? A few here held up their hands.

The children then sung the hymn commencing, "Lord, how delightful 'tis to see," &c.; after which Mr. Green engaged in prayer and the proceedings closed, the examination having been in all respects most satisfactory.

Children's Gallery.

I SHALL MEET YOU IN HEAVEN.

REBEKAH THOMAS, the subject of the following sketch, was born in the year 1861. She was the child of a poor but industrious widowed mother. From an early age she had attended the Deptford Ragged School, and ever paid marked attention to God's Word. Suddenly taken ill with disease of the knee, she was removed to Guy's Hospital, where she never rallied, and died on Tuesday night, June 3, 1873.

I visited her the Sunday previous to her death. She was delighted to see me, and assured me she did not mind being in the hospital, that she was very happy, as her dear countenance fully testified. She told me that Jesus was dearer to her than all beside, that she did love Jesus, and was soon going to be with Him. She was not allowed to read, she said, but could lay and think of the many Scriptures she had learnt at the Ragged School, and she had learnt the text which hung nearest her bed, which she repeated to me. I said, "You know the little hymn you often sung at school?" She said, "Yes."

"Jesus loves me, loves me still,
Though I'm very weak and ill;
From His shining throne on high,
Comes to watch me where I lie."

I took her hand in my own—it was like a live coal; but although suffering intense pain, not so much as a sigh ever escaped her lips. Her mother wept, but, turning to me, the dear child said, "I tell mother not to weep; there is nothing to cry for. God took my father, and He is going to take me." She prayed to God, she said, to help her to bear her pain patiently; but could not help crying when her legs were dressed, having had to undergo a most painful operation. I read the blessed vision John had of the redeemed. She was satisfied that she too was soon going to join the happy number.

I could easily have imagined myself sitting by the bedside of an experienced saint, rather than that of a little child, so deeply was she being taught by the Spirit. He was indeed her remembrancer, according to the Saviour's promise, "He shall bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you." On leaving her she

joyfully said, "I shall meet you in heaven," and on the following Tuesday night the King sent His messenger, Death, to unlock the weary little frame, and the redeemed spirit took its flight to realms of day.

Precious child, now among the happy number of those who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. She learnt the way to heaven in the Ragged School. E. R.

Giffin Street Ragged School,
July 13, 1873.

THE LORD BLESS MY PENNIES.

A LITTLE girl of six years old was very desirous of putting her pennies into the missionary box with others. When saying her evening prayers at her papa's knee, she hesitated a moment, and then added, "Lord bless my two pennies for Jesus' sake, Amen."

After the child had gone to bed, her father asked his wife, "What made Gracie say that?"

"She has prayed thus every night since giving her pennies to the missionary box," was the mother's reply.

Do you, dear young reader, pray "God bless my pennies" when you give your mite to some Ragged School? If not, pray earnestly for the blessing, and you will soon find that prayer will do more than your pennies.

Editor's Note-Book.

FISHERS OF MEN.

THE Lord does not call us to labour for Him without Himself giving the needful strength. He says not, "*Be ye* fishers of men," but "*I will make you to become* fishers of men." Here is not only the commission to labour, but the promise also of power for work. And in Luke v. 10, we have the still further promise of success: "From henceforth *thou shalt catch* men." Let us carefully notice these promises. So few of the Lord's people really work for Him. It is probably because of the shrinking, the sense of personal unfitness, or the natural shyness, which so often fills the heart, when work for Him comes across their path. There is always some excuse for leaving it alone. Well! here is the remedy. Let us set to work as instruments of God's grace, conscious of being the representatives of Christ, believing that, weak as we are, the presence of Christ is with us, and that His power also is ours. The kingdom for which we are to work is His own, the glory is His own, and the power, too, comes from Him. Never was there work set before any of His people, but the power comes with it, had they looked for it. It is not really our own weakness with which we find fault, but we are rather doing dishonour to the grace and power of our risen and ascended Lord, when we shrink from His commission to be made "fishers of men," and when He tells us that He will enable us for the work.—*Rev. E. Boys, Ware.*

PULL AT THE OAR.

THE servants of Jesus are like rowers in a boat. They sit with their backs to the bow, and cannot see what lies ahead. But the helmsman at the stern is on the look out, and he steers the boat whithersoever he wills. So in our godly undertakings we sit with our backs to the future. It is all unknown, untried, impenetrable. We know not what the morrow may bring forth. But it is our business to pull at the oar of prayer and earnest labour. There is a Divine Helms-

man who sees the future, and who holds the rudder in His hand. We have only to commit our way to Him, and to pull at the oar of duty. This is faith.

KEEP ON PRAYING.

"Do you think," I asked, "that the Lord will let me see, in this life, the salvation of the souls for whom I pray?"

"I cannot say as to that. When I was a child in the Sabbath School, in the old country," she replied, "my faithful teacher used to say, 'I have prayed too much for my class for one of them to be lost.' I was a thoughtless girl at the time, and remember wondering at it, and thinking it a very self-confident remark—she was so sure. 'I shall have them all,' she would say. 'I shall say to Christ, at the judgment, Here am I and the class thou hast given me.'"

"And were they all converted?" I asked.

"Yes. She did not live to see it; but my eyes have seen it—the last of the sixteen gathered into the fold."—*Witnessing for Jesus.*

Our Library Table.

Analysis of Roman History. By W. C. PEARCE. London: Longman and Co.

Based as European laws are upon Roman law, the study of the history of that great people is essential to the understanding of modern civilisation. Yet there is so much of the mythical in its earliest records that it required the acumen of a Niebuhr or an Ihne to separate the true from the false. We know no other synoptical work in which this separation of fact from fiction is so well done as in the above treatise. All, in fact, that need be known is summarised in this analysis of Roman history. The explanatory notes, too, so freely scattered through its pages, and which could scarcely form part of the text, add much to its value. The style is lucid and pointed, and two words are never used when one will suffice. We therefore cordially recommend this analysis of Roman history to those who are about to commence that important study; and even the advanced student will find many hints, especially as respects the more recent sources of information, which will prove most serviceable.

Philip Phillips's Hallowed Songs London: Partridge and Co.

This work includes all the stirring hymns and melodies popularised by the "Singing Pilgrim." There is not one humdrum hymn or tune in the collection; but all are calculated to show that, if Christianity points to a bright hereafter, it is not without its joys even now. In a day when there is so much false doctrine afloat it is satisfactory to find that these "Hallowed Songs" are as Scriptural as they are beautiful. In every respect then this collection is a valuable contribution to the "Service of Song."

Facts and Scraps.

HEART DISEASE. — Unhappily the death returns show that during the last twenty years there has been a steadily progressive rise in the registered mortality from heart disease in England and Wales. In the year 1850 the recorded fatal cases numbered 11,356, in 1860 they amounted to 18,758, and in 1870 to 25,259. Dr. Farr considers that this result is due to the greater wear and tear of business and the increased mental activity of the age.

HOSPITAL SUNDAY.—The total result of the collections made on Sunday, the 15th June, was a sum of £27,403, of which £24,571 had been allotted to hospitals, £967 to dispensaries, and £881 to convalescent homes and kindred institutions. A small balance was thus left in hand for any incidental expenses connected with the distribution of the fund. The next Hospital Sunday is fixed for the second Sunday in June, 1874.

LONDON PARKS. — The Registrar-General gives the following as the area of the public parks in and about London, as ascertained by the Ordnance Survey department :—St. James's-park, 58·5 acres; the Green-park, 60·3 acres; Hyde-park, 386 acres; Kensington-gardens, 245·5 acres; the Regent's-park, 406·2 acres; Victoria-park, 226·8 acres; Southwark-park, 63 acres; Kennington-park, 19·7 acres; Battersea-park, 199·4 acres; Greenwich-park, 190·4 acres. These ten parks, together containing 1,852·8 acres, are all within the registration division designated "London," which comprises 78,080 acres, including 2,718 acres of the Thames. Beyond these limits, but still within the district served by the metropolitan police, there is also Richmond-park, with 2,015·5 acres; Kew-gardens, &c., with 322·8 acres; Old Deer-park, with 357·2 acres; Bushey-park, 993·9 acres; and Hampton-court-park, 576·7 acres. These last five parks contain together 4,266·1 acres, which added to the area of the ten parks first above named, make a total of 6,118·9 acres of public park in or about London.

PURE LITERATURE. — The Company of Fishmongers have granted fifty guineas to the Pure Literature Society, to enable them to continue their grants of libraries to working men's institutes and other institutions.

PUBLIC-HOUSES.—An Inland Revenue return shows the amount of all licenses locally collected in the financial year 1871-72. In all England and Wales, with a population of 22,712,266 at the census of 1871, duty amounting to £918,415 was charged for public-house licenses in the year 1871-72. In the City of London, with 74,897 resident population, the duty amounted to £22,551; in the City of Westminster, with 246,406 population within the parliamentary borough, the amount was £15,769; in the borough of Chelsea, with 258,050 population, £12,965; in the borough of Marylebone, with 477,532, £13,001; in Finsbury, with 452,484, £8,111; in Hackney, with 362,378, £14,389; in the Tower Hamlets, with 391,790, £4,478; in Southwark, with 208,725, £8,367; in Lambeth, with 379,048, £7,834; in Greenwich, with 169,361, £6,221.

RELIGION OF CRIMINALS.—Last month a Parliamentary paper was issued, from which it appears that last year, in 116 prisons in England and Wales there were 146,146 prisoners. The number of salaried ministers was 133, of whom 118 were Church of England, and 15 Roman Catholics. There were besides in various prisons unsalaried ministers. Of the number of prisoners 96,697 were Church of England, 38,581 Roman Catholics, 10,648 Protestant Dissenters, 9 Greeks, 256 Jews, 57 other persuasions, 279 "no religion," and 219 "not ascertained."

Notices of Meetings.

BLENHEIM ROAD, HORNSEY RISE.

Recently a public meeting was held in connection with the children's services conducted at the above school. The Rev. John Corbin presided.

The secretary read the report, which stated that the children's services were conducted by the Rev. W. J. Holder, on Monday evenings. The first of the services was held on October the 29th, 1872, when 63 children were present, viz., 35 girls and 28 boys. They have been continued up to the present time, without missing one week, so that altogether 31 meetings have been held. The attendance at each of these has been very good. The highest number present on any one evening was 148, the lowest 43; but the average attendance for the whole term is 57 girls and 32 boys, total 96, their ages varying from six to eighteen years. At each meeting the children have been told the text, and book where it was to be found, and have been asked to search out the chapter and verse during the week, and bring it in, written on paper, on the following Monday. Of these answers have been received from about 480, or an average of 18 a week. The interest taken in the meetings by the children appears to be very great, and from reports received from their parents, much valued. The order and attention has been good, maintained entirely by the young friends, six of the seniors acting as assistants and leaders of their part of the service. At the desire of the children two prayer-meetings have been held, at which about 30 attended. A large measure of the success attending these services is owing to the interest, kindness, and attention of Miss Watmore, in conducting the singing at the meetings, and the committee are deeply indebted to her for her self-denial and labour of love. One of the children has been received into Christian fellowship with the church; it is believed that in several hearts there are good desires awakened.

DENZELL STREET, CLARE MARKET.

The twenty-sixth anniversary of this Ragged School lately took place in the Parochial Schoolroom, the right hon. the Earl of Shaftesbury in the chair.

Mr. John Palmer, the honorary secretary, read the report, which acknowledged the continued support which had been received, and the success which had marked the development of the agencies connected with the schools. After referring to the action of the School Board in connection with Ragged Schools, mention was made of the fact that, in the report of the Education Department on the state of existing elementary schools, the educational status of the children attending the Clare Market Ragged Schools obtained the commendation of the inspector, but that the building in which the schools were held was deemed inefficient. Time was allowed for rendering it efficient, but from the lack of funds it had been found impossible to accomplish that work. The operations comprise a Day School for boys and girls, an Infant School, a Night School for Boys and Girls, Sunday Morning, Afternoon, and Evening Schools, an Adult Bible Class, Sewing Classes, a Lending Library, a Penny Bank, a Clothing Fund, a Mothers' Meeting, Destitute Children's Dinner Fund, an Upper Class for Youths, Penny Readings during the winter months, a Drum and Fife Band, and a Juvenile Temperance Society. The statistics showed that the number receiving aid from the

institution amounted to over 600 children and 400 adults. During the year 49 boys and 16 girls had been sent to situations, and 10 boys and 3 girls received prizes in May last for keeping their situations from one to five years, and obtaining good characters from their employers. During the year the number of cards issued to depositors in the Penny Bank amounted to 821; 7,241 deposits had been made, amounting to £290 7s. 5d. From November to April over 4,000 dinners were given weekly to poor children, and with results which had shown the value of the agency. The Library consisted of 375 volumes, and 107 borrowers had changed their books 5,136 times. The subscriptions amounted to £225 17s. 6½d. The expenses were £225 9s. 2d., leaving a balance of 8s. 4½d. in favour of the institution.

The meeting was addressed by the Revs. W. C. Heaton, W. Lea, R. J. Simpson, G. H. Stanton, and Messrs. B. G. Lake and Preedy.

INGRAM PLACE, HOLLOWAY.

The annual meeting of the Holloway Ragged Schools was held at the schoolroom, Ingram Place, under the presidency of Mr. Angus Jennings. The attendance consisted almost entirely of the actual workers in the school.

Mr. Potter, the honorary secretary, read the annual report, which stated that the past year had been one of change. During twenty-six years the schools had supplied the means of religious and secular education to the neighbourhood. But the committee had handed the school premises over to the School Board for lack of hands to continue the work. At a meeting of the subscribers, held on the 29th ult., this was determined on, the committee reserving the use of the premises on Sundays, and at all times when not used for School Board purposes. It was resolved to carry on with greater vigour the work of religious education, for the need of this instruction was as great as ever. To supply it, Sunday morning services were held to draw in children who played about the streets, and the teachers had succeeded in getting an attendance of from 20 to 40. The Sunday Schools were carried on successfully, there being an average attendance of 101 in the afternoons, and 126 in the evenings. The attendance fluctuated, but from 300 to 400 children were under religious instruction. A Week Night School for those who did not attend the Day School was held on Thursday evenings, and during the winter months, with an attendance of from 20 to 30. Cottage Services were conducted by Mr. Clutterbuck, who had an adult congregation of from 40 to 60. A Penny Bank had been established, and had now an increasing number of depositors. There were now 64 depositors, with a sum of £14 12s. in the hands of the treasurer. The committee had resolved to establish a Crêche, or infants' nursery, intending to begin the work in a small way in a cottage, till the school premises had been given up by the School Board. The need of such an institution was much felt, as mothers compelled to earn their daily bread were either compelled to neglect their children, or pay nearly as much as they earned for nursing.

The treasurer's report showed that the receipts of the year amounted to £79 12s. 11d., and the expenditure left a small balance in hand.

The addresses which were delivered by several experienced Ragged School workers were eminently practical.

Papers, Original and Selected.

RAGGED SCHOOLS *v.* BRITISH CRIME.

THE phrase "dangerous classes" has, unhappily, been naturalised throughout Europe, nor is it less descriptive of large sections of British society. Thus, the "Judicial Statistics" just issued for 1872 give a painful picture of the number of known criminals, and of their crimes. For they show that by the side of fabulous wealth there is gigantic poverty, and equally gigantic crime; and thus that, notwithstanding all that is being done by the philanthropist and the Christian, there are those who are alone kept from open violation of the law by legal force or by an active police.

From these authenticated statistics of the Government it appears that the number of *known* thieves in England and Wales is 29,455. In addition to this large number of convicted thieves there are 25,558 suspected persons of both sexes, making the total aggregate of those who live by felony 55,013. Of these 6,012 have not attained sixteen years of age.

In London alone there are 1,683 *known* depredators. Last year they committed at least 13,699 robberies.

As might be expected, those thief-makers, "Receivers of stolen goods," form a considerable population. Many more, indeed, are suspected of obtaining their living in this way, to whom the crime has not been brought home. But the receivers of stolen goods who are known to the police authorities number 1,837. Of these receivers eight—probably hereditary ones—are under sixteen years of age.

To keep in check these lawless classes quite an army of policemen are employed. Throughout England the services of 27,999 constables are retained, being about one for every 811 of the population. The London police alone numbers 10,433, or the population of no mean city. To show what a costly thing crime is, it may be stated that the cost of the police for London and the provinces last year amounted to £2,372,888.

Happily, black as is this picture of British crime, it shows

marked signs of decrease. When compared with the judicial statistics of 1871, those for 1872 show a decrease of known thieves of fifty-six per cent.; in suspected persons of six per cent.; and, what is still better, of twenty per cent. of receivers of stolen goods. But this check in the growth of crime will be found still more remarkable if we compare the figures of 1862 with those of 1872. When it is stated that British crime has decreased no less than thirty per cent. during the past ten years, it will be seen how rapidly the almost complete extinction of crime is approaching.

In this diminution of crime the vigilance of the police, and the laws for registering released felons, doubtless have had no slight influence; but we think that no small portion of this social improvement is due to Ragged Schools, and those healthy offshoots —Refuges, Industrial Schools, and Reformatories. That this inference is not the mere opinion of enthusiastic promoters of those movements is proved by many facts. The practical action of the Queen's judges confirms it. Thus, the present and two last lord chancellors have publicly advocated Ragged Schools; and at least seven of H.M.'s judges have given either personal or pecuniary support to our movement. Only recently the Deputy-Recorder of the City of London, Sir T. Chambers, M.P., publicly stated that "the *remarkable decrease in crime was mainly due to Ragged Schools* and Reformatories." The Earl of Morley also bore the same testimony to the social value of Ragged Schools when he stated in the House of Lords that "he believed that the facilities for the detection of crime, increased education, and the *charitable institutions in which the noble earl opposite* (Lord Shaftesbury) *took so much interest, had to an immense extent repressed crime* in this country."

That this would be a necessary result of the successful working of Ragged Schools requires no proof. For, though the pioneers were urged into this field of Christian labour solely by love of souls, they well knew that, if the youth of the dangerous classes were saved, society must necessarily reap the benefit of their moral reclamation.

But before referring to the influence of Ragged Schools in diminishing crime, we would briefly notice the statistics supplied by the "Reformatory and Refuge Union." In the year 1851 it appears that there were 34 Reformatories, and 160 Refuges or Industrial Schools: these had accommodation for 15,000 inmates.

But so successful has their influence been found in checking juvenile crime, that there are now 65 Reformatories and about 300 Certified Industrial Schools and Refuges, with accommodation for 31,500 juveniles. It is scarcely needful to add that these Refuges and Industrial Schools, by their training and supervision, have done much to prevent the formation of criminal habits.

We would now revert to those Ragged Schools which, planted as they are in most of the large towns of England, have done so much to reduce juvenile crime. We have no means of ascertaining the total number of scholars, but we doubt not that they include considerably more than 100,000 children of the gutter. In Liverpool alone 8,715 are embraced by the local Ragged School Union; and the Manchester Union includes, we believe, a still larger number of our social waifs.

But in London, where the movement has been fostered by the Ragged School Union from the outset, it is estimated that the 180 affiliated institutions include 29,000 children, and about 10,000 adults. From facts which have come under the notice of the officials of the Union, it seems certain that no less than 750,000 children have passed through the London Ragged Schools. During the past ten years alone above 400,000 have been so admitted, each child remaining on an average for at least one year; and for the whole of that period they were under direct religious and moral training.

Nor are the social results less striking. Thus, five of the oldest schools reported to the Ragged School Union in the autumn of 1871, that out of 36,633 scholars 15,202 were *known* to have entered the regular labour market, and to be earning their bread by honest industry. When we consider their homes and their surroundings, how many *must* have become "loafers," if not thieves, had it not been for their Ragged Schools, we may well affirm that if crime has diminished so remarkably during the past ten years, no small proportion of this social improvememt is due to Ragged Schools.

Nor do we think that, notwithstanding the labours of the London School Board, our social work is less needful than it was thirty years ago, when a few Christian philanthropists, Bible in hand, stormed den and hovel, to win the souls of the destitute or outcast for Jesus. The London Ragged School Union has still 180 institutions, with above 29,000 children and 10,000 adults

under its supervision; and in every case advice or pecuniary aid is given where found needful to promote this good work. And seeing the social good already effected, we cannot but infer that with increased funds, and, what is equally essential, a larger staff of teachers, they will do still more to curtail, if not to extinguish, British crime.

We would then urge our readers to greater personal and more persistent efforts in order that the splendid results already seen in the marked diminution of crime may be still further increased. However secularists may doubt the fact, the "Judicial Statistics" of 1872 fully prove that there are no such moral reformers as true Christians, just as there is no human agency for bringing fallen man into social obedience equal to that supplied by the Church of Christ. The State can doubtless do something to check or to punish the lawless; but its best efforts are poor indeed when compared with the influence of Christian love. This law of love has from the very first been the rule of Ragged Schools; and men imbued with love to Christ have not only been used to win thousands of souls for Jesus, but by their direct and indirect influence they have happily reduced the average of British crime.

HOW HALF A TALENT BECAME TEN.

BY THE REV. F. H. MARLING, TORONTO.

SOME five or six years ago, a young man came into our Sabbath School who wanted a class badly. The superintendent thought that he would not be able to manage a class, and it certainly seemed unlikely, for there was a look of deficiency in his countenance, betokening mental weakness. The superintendent finally gave him something to do, using him here and there to fill up gaps made by *absent* teachers.

To-day, that young man is teaching a Mission School, on the morning of the Lord's day. On his way thither he stops at the barracks to distribute tracts and say a word or two to the soldiers. In the afternoon he teaches another Mission School, and in the evening holds meetings for the children of the school and their parents. On Monday night he attends a regular meeting for prayer, held by the Young Men's Christian Association. On Tuesday night he meets with the Association, of which he is an active member. On Wednesday night he is at another Prayer Meeting; Thursday night a Church Prayer Meeting, and on Friday night still another Prayer Meeting. The speaker had been with him in some of these services. He conducts them well—as well as a great many ministers would do it.

What is the secret of it? He had scarcely one talent even, only a half-talent in our estimation. But God was using through him one of the

"weak things," to confound the things that are mighty. *His whole heart was in his work.* He kept a note-book, and set down facts and thoughts that struck him as being such as he could use. He loved Jesus. He loved souls. He would not let anything discourage him. He was a brave, noble, patient, persistent worker, albeit not endowed with as much brains as most of us may have, for the Master's work.

Now, are any teachers in the Ragged Schools beginning to be discouraged, to feel that they are weak, that they cannot "talk in meeting," and that they are not qualified to do much for Christ? Let me remind them of my friend John, this "deficient" young man, and assure them if they only love Jesus, and are in earnest, and make him their friend and helper, they may be useful. To such I would say, "Stick to it," "Go on," and your half-talent even, or quarter-talent, will grow to be "one" or "five" or "ten."

HARTSHORN COURT RAGGED SCHOOL, GOLDEN LANE.

One Sunday evening in 1871, with George Herbert's quaint lines ringing in my ears—

> "Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright,
> The bridal of the earth and sky,
> The dews shall weep thy fall to-night,
> For thou must die"—

I entered Golden Lane from the north, and came into contact with people who brushed the prismatic colours from my thoughts, and left me, like the weather-beaten butterfly, half inclined to retreat. My first call to earth came in a shower of periwinkle-shells from an open window, not intended as an assault, but only as an expeditious method of clearing the tea-table of that which could not be used for another occasion. Orange-peel followed from a sharpshooter in a by-court, and then some forbidding men, with beetle-brows, eyed me suspiciously. This passed through, the remainder was comparatively plain sailing, with moderate courage, and an appearance of "business" in one's walk—business suited to "Cow Heel Alley," and which will not bring one into trouble in "Hot Water Court." The place is old, and the inhabitants are all "ragamuffins." Even the very smells are ancient, consisting as they do of stale fish, rotting vegetables, tainted meat, and other nastinesses.

The houses are said to have seen royalty, and many a merchant-prince smoked his quiet pipe beneath their ornamental ceilings, and trod their once polished and oaken floors; but the smoke and grime of ages have darkened the one, and the worm has engraven the other, so that ornament runs into decay, and the tooth of time overcomes the carver. As of the houses of the people here, so of their clothes. Once worn by worthier people, their motley garments are a puzzle to the uninitiated, and one wonders how they manage to take them off, or how they put them on again

In Memoriam.

JOSEPH SHEPHERD WYON.
SIR JOHN ANSON, BART.
ZECHARIAH ROBERTS.
FRANK DEAN.

IT will be seen from the heading that "God's Acre" has lately been enriched by drawing to it fresh additions from the ranks of Ragged School supporters and workers. Such additions lead us for a time to hang our harps upon the willows, for we are separated from those we loved and esteemed as fellow-helpers in our workfield, and those with whom it had been our happiness, in varied ways, to be associated for many years. For them we rightly mourn; but not without hope, a bright hope, of a joyful reunion. In life they manifested, each in his own sphere, a devotedness to their Master's cause that proved them to have had the living faith that worked by love, and wrought results useful and valuable to those around them. God owned their labours and gave them his blessing, that made them rejoice while serving him. In death they pass away from us, and we should not be human if we could suffer the loss without a heart-pang. But why do we talk of "death"? There is no death to the Christian worker—God's child—Christ's disciple. True, they have passed through the portal, and gone beyond the range of human sight; still, we repeat, in Longfellow's words—

"There is no death! What seems so is transition;
This life of mortal breath
Is but a suburb of the life Elysian,
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The loss of such a friend cannot but be great, very great; but to none so great as to his sorrowing and bereaved widow, with whom this Committee sincerely sympathise, and for whom they earnestly pray that the God of all grace will grant her special strength to bear, like a smitten but loving child, His providential dealings, and lead her, after the first gush of parting agony, to say from the heart, 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.'"

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without a map, the embroidery running so into tatters that where the one ends and the other begins is very doubtful.

Yet here the philanthropist has been busy, so that we now find, without going many feet out of the lane, parish schools, baths, and washhouses, a working men's club, and three Ragged Schools, namely, Brackley Street, Hatfield Street, and Hartshorn Court. The one under the superintendence of Mr. Orsman is especially worth a visit on Sundays.

The "passage" is well stocked with costermongers' barrows, but yet ingress and egress are easy if you go in single file. In a room of the City Baths, once used as a *sudatorium*, but in the good effect of which the people of Golden Lane have no faith, is held the Children's Mission or Sunday Service. Here is received the rough material—boys with unwashed faces, tattered garments, and strong lungs; girls with unkempt hair, clothes arranged as though with a hayfork, and loud unrestrained voices.

Once in the room, Scripture meets them everywhere, in their hymns, in their lessons, and on the walls; even the ceiling is painted with some of the most striking texts from the New Testament.

You leave the school, enter the chapel, and find it crammed. By favour you are allowed to pass to the back of the pulpit, and so get a good view of the congregation, and what do you see? The very same type of face as in the school, save that it is clean and has lost the ne'er-do-well expression. More attentive listeners, and so many youthful, you never came across, nor a more earnest preacher. The singing is not scientific, but it is spirited; and here and there you hear the finer note of the cultivated voice. The service is ended, and you wish to have a word with that earnest preacher and moving spirit of the whole machinery. If you can but stay till after the Prayer Meeting you shall have it, and so you are gently pressed into remaining to the end, at a quarter to ten, with half the congregation present. On inquiry you find that most of them have been here from half-past nine in the morning, and were it not for their dress, you might easily fancy yourself carried back to the Puritan times.

Now what has done all this? Sympathy, with tact. An able man is at the head of the Mission, who works for love and not reward, except that of his Master, and he has gathered able men about him, if they be not very refined. Their plan is to watch the metal as it heats to whiteness, and to strike while the iron is hot, and to *strike home*. Here are ex-drunkards, ex-thieves, ex-blasphemers, and ex-prizefighters, with wonderful histories of how they became changed. But Mr. Orsman, like most great teachers, thankful to save any, does not waste too much time on the besotted in sin, though they are visited in their lodgings and in the tramps' houses; for he seizes their hearts while young, and has the happy knack of knowing how to keep them.

To any one interested, the work is perfectly free to visit; only for comfort sake it is advisable, in making inquiries in "the Lane," to use the "open sesame" of Mr. Orsman's name. The visitor will then meet with many a protector, and perhaps pass out of the district, as I did, with those other words of George Herbert's at his tongue's end:—

"Only a sweet and virtuous soul,
Like seasoned timber, never gives;
But when the whole world turns to coal,
Then chiefly lives."

Part II.

At the end of two years I revisited the scene. The chapel is deserted, the school is no longer kept in the *sudatorium*, nor is the voice of the preacher heard. The story of the churches in Asia Minor comes to my mind, and I ask, "Has this good work too fallen—fallen into nothing in these two short years?" If anything, the neighbourhood has improved, and with misgiving and fear I speak the talismanic word, and get for reply that the old premises were inconvenient and the rent had been raised. A new National School for St. Luke's parish has been built in Old Street, and the premises formerly used for that purpose in Golden Lane having become empty, the Mission has been removed thither. In it I learn that above thirty distinct operations are conducted, week day or Sundays, varying from the usual Ragged Sunday, Day, and Night Schools for children, up to Barrow Clubs and Tramps' Kitchen Services for adults. At least 1,000 children and adults are under the influence of this Ragged School.

I find the congregation just as attentive as formerly, and the preacher quite as earnest, the congregation being perhaps a trifle larger. I listen to the hymn, so well sung by the choir, and so heartily joined in by the congregation. I fancy that I hear a faint echo of the music by young voices—a kind of whispering refrain a few hundred feet off. On inquiry I discover that in the room beneath my feet there is a Children's Church held, and I slip away from my seat at the door to say a word to those dear young worshippers, where I am received very heartily, though my words of counsel hit hard and hit home.

It is eight o'clock and the service is ended, but what means "the Earl's" barrow at the door? I thought the "coster" to whom it was lent was not allowed to work on a Sunday; yet here it is with a piece of furniture for removal, and all the youthful part of the chapel congregation following it! What can I do but satisfy my curiosity? I go and find that barrow's furniture and congregation enter a street which is a *cul-de-sac* close to Mr. Bradlaugh's Hall of "Science," and presently the furniture is opened—for it is a harmonium; the voices of the youthful congregation sing "How beautiful upon the mountains," Mr. Orsman mounts the barrow, and in a few pithy words exhorts and warns. A hymn is then sung, and so alternate hymn and words continue till half-past nine, when a new congregation of two hundred people, many from Bradlaugh's, depart with the last refrain of the hymn to Jesus and the preacher's benediction ringing in their ears, some humming the last words and becoming their own preachers to their own souls, in despite of their unbelief.

J. C. F.

In Memoriam.

JOSEPH SHEPHERD WYON.
SIR JOHN ANSON, BART.
ZECHARIAH ROBERTS.
FRANK DEAN.

IT will be seen from the heading that "God's Acre" has lately been enriched by drawing to it fresh additions from the ranks of Ragged School supporters and workers. Such additions lead us for a time to hang our harps upon the willows, for we are separated from those we loved and esteemed as fellow-helpers in our workfield, and those with whom it had been our happiness, in varied ways, to be associated for many years. For them we rightly mourn; but not without hope, a bright hope, of a joyful reunion. In life they manifested, each in his own sphere, a devotedness to their Master's cause that proved them to have had the living faith that worked by love, and wrought results useful and valuable to those around them. God owned their labours and gave them his blessing, that made them rejoice while serving him. In death they pass away from us, and we should not be human if we could suffer the loss without a heart-pang. But why do we talk of "death"? There is no death to the Christian worker—God's child—Christ's disciple. True, they have passed through the portal, and gone beyond the range of human sight; still, we repeat, in Longfellow's words—

"There is no death! What seems so is transition;
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Is but a suburb of the life Elysian,
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Sir John Anson, Bart.—This friend of Ragged Schools was travelling northward in company with two daughters in the Scotch express train and

suddenly deprived of life in the awful accident that occurred at Wigan on the early morning of August 2 last. Fortunately the young ladies, although in the same compartment of the carriage with their father, escaped with comparatively slight injury. Sir John was one of the few surviving friends who helped the Ragged School Union when struggling into existence more than twenty-five years since. That aid he never withdrew, but continued a cheerful and liberal supporter to the time of his lamentable death, the cause of which seems wrapped in so much mystery.

On receiving notice of his death the Committee sent a letter of condolence to Lady Anson and family. The following is the minute on the subject:—

"That this Committee have with deep feelings of sorrow heard of the lamentable death of their friend, Sir John Anson, Bart., who for the long period of twenty-five years rendered very effective annual assistance in support of the Ragged School movement. His generous and hearty co-operation for nearly the whole term of the Society's existence was a source of strength and comfort to the Committee and officers. The dark providence that has so suddenly removed him is mysterious and painful; but faith in the wisdom and love of a gracious God enables them to bow in humble submission to the decisions of Him who cannot err, and who will prove to His redeemed children that sudden death is sudden glory.

The Committee desire to express to the bereaved and sorrowing widow and family their heartfelt sympathy under their present irreparable loss, and earnestly pray that the Husband of the widow and the Father of the fatherless will manifest to them His loving presence and grant them all-supporting grace."

ZECHARIAH ROBERTS.—Another of the sufferers from the Wigan accident was Mr. Roberts, who had for six years been schoolmaster of Mr. Head's Industrial and Ragged Schools in Carlisle. He had been on a visit to his mother, and she was returning with her son to take up her home in his family when the accident occurred. The force of the concussion threw her out of the carriage high into the air, over a lofty wall and through the roof into an iron foundry. Her death was instant, but her son lived a few hours in great suffering, and died before his wife could reach him. The remains were sent on to Carlisle, and at the funeral on the following Wednesday Mr. Roberts's elder scholars marched in front of the hearse, and sang suitable hymns at the open grave.

Although Mr. Roberts died at the early age of thirty, yet the energy of his character had enabled him to press much service into little time. His skill in the management of his school had raised it to a high degree of efficiency, and his kindly disposition and Christian benevolence won for him an unusual number of personal and attached friends, who mourn with a deep and heartfelt sorrow his painful removal from their midst.

FRANK DEAN.—At the early age of thirty-three Mr. Dean was called to his rest, and for two years before was laid aside by a painful illness,

during which he suffered much, which dearest friends saw, and were pained because powerless to alleviate. When in health Mr. Dean did good, as it were by stealth, not letting his right hand know what his left did, and he was far too retiring to be known except by a few intimate and trusty friends. His kind manners and generous disposition, however, endeared him to all within his somewhat limited circle. He was a gentleman of education, and entered Lincoln's Inn with a view to an insight into the work of a Chancery barrister. Some six years since he went to America to attend to the affairs of a family estate, and while there was smitten down with fever. That illness was a memorable turning-point in his life. From that time his great object in life seemed to be to know the will of God that he might do it. On recovering, an early impression was entertained of becoming a missionary to China; but from this he was dissuaded on account of his mother being a widow, and his sister an invalid. He was, however, a volunteer for Christian labour in other fields, and soon connected himself with Field Lane and Ogle Mews Ragged Schools. Thinking, with his means and time, he could do something more, his attention was drawn to that singular labyrinth of courts and alleys running in all directions from Aldersgate Street or Goswell Road on the west, Bunhill Row on the east, Barbican and Beech Street on the south, and Old Street on the north. Here, in Bell Alley, he found the nucleus of a small mission effort, that needed help and development. He soon concluded that a free Day School was a decided want of the locality. This he formed and wholly supported from his own private resources. He induced a personal friend of his own to take the oversight of it and teach the children. The school soon became known and popular, and the place too small for half that sought admission. Much of this success rested with the master, who combined the missionary and teacher in one person. More space was essential, and a large vacant room in the Hatfield Street Ragged School, close by, was secured, and to it the scholars were removed, and there the school continues to flourish.

At the entrance upon the prime of life, and at the commencement of an apparently useful career, our friend was called to pass through much painful affliction to the rest that remains for the people of God, leaving an only sister and a widowed mother to mourn over their loss.

MISSION SCHOOLS IN PALESTINE.

SEEING how much Mission Schools have done to gospelise heathen lands, we are glad to intimate that there is an increasing number of Mission Schools in the Holy Land. The first Protestant Mission School was opened in Jerusalem in 1817; but so fierce was the opposition of the Jewish Rabbis and the priesthood of the apostate Latin and Greek communions, that only nine children, and they the poorest of the poor, could for some time be induced to attend. But in spite of bribes or of excom-

munication, the work went on, and there are now five Mission Schools in the Holy City, with an average attendance of 150. All of these are the children of poverty, and several are of Hebrew parentage. They display much intelligence, and the hymns so popular in Ragged Schools at home, and which have been translated into their mother tongue, are as much prized in the Mission Schools of Jerusalem as at home. Hence it is not now uncommon to hear the scholars singing about Jesus in the streets of the city where he was crucified.

Twenty other Mission Schools are scattered through Palestine. Like the attendants of the schools in Jerusalem, the poor parents have been subjected to bitter persecution on the part of the priestly haters of gospel light. But in spite of every opposition, above one thousand children, and also many mothers, are attracted to these schools. And all, whatever their age or professed creed, read the Bible in the land where it was written.

Some of these Mission Schools partake of the character of the English Refuges—board and lodging being provided as well as education—and as such are mainly composed of orphans. One of the best worked is planted at Nazareth. One of the earnest teachers, Miss Challis, was for many years a teacher at Marigold Place and Walworth Ragged Schools, and showed much power in winning souls for Jesus.

Most of these Mission Schools, though not called by the name, are modelled on the plan of the British Ragged Schools. Hence the education is free, and the scholars mostly consist of the children of the very poor.

It is satisfactory to know that there, as here, the gospel has penetrated many hearts, and that thousands more have heard that pure gospel which is still "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

HOME VISITING IN CLERKENWELL.

It is affirmed by all connected with Christian missions that there is not anything which tends so much to the success of the whole work as a systematic mode of visiting the people at their own homes, or that which conduces more to a friendly understanding of your kind desires, as repeated visits of district visitors at the people's own homes. The overburdened heart is relieved by telling its sad tale out. How thankful they have been for the ready word of sympathy and counsel; and to many it has been the dawn of a new life. By this means we have the best means of judging of the position and nature of the people among whom we labour, and but for this particular branch of work it would have been utterly impossible to reach many of the most destitute and depraved. Thousands who will never go to a place of worship will receive and read a tract that is left with them, and many who would be offended at the earnest preacher have been won by the influence of these repeated visits. We can look around us now, and see many who have been won to Christ through these visitors, and whose homes have been made brighter and happier through this means.

The visitors whose labours we are about to describe meet every Sunday afternoon in the Ragged School and Mission Room in Laystall Street, Clerkenwell, for a few moments' prayer; and, after seeking the guidance and help of God, start out upon their work, furnished with a parcel of large and exceedingly interesting tracts. They take what appear to be the most neglected places round the Mission, seeking to enter each house and room, trying to make each visit a blessing, rather than to make many visits; giving a special invitation to the house of God, seeking to read a portion of God's Word and offer prayer.

As it may be interesting to some to know the kind of cases we meet in visiting the poor and sick, I cannot do better than give a brief account of one of my Sunday afternoon visits to the sick and distressed cases. My first visit was made to a poor woman, an entire cripple, who, having trodden upon a piece of orange-peel, had fallen and broken her thigh. Unfortunately it had never been properly set, and after being many months in the hospital she had been discharged incurable. Since then she has never been able to lie down upon her bed, either day or night, but is constantly propped up in a sitting posture; her sufferings are indeed terrible to see. Her only help is a sister, who has to leave her all day and go to work, and sometimes four or five shillings is all they have during the week to pay their rent and keep themselves, so that they are often without scarce a bit of food or firing. How thankful have they been when I have been able to give them a little help, to the afflicted one a little meat or wine, to try and strengthen her, she being bodily ill through her affliction, after a few words of sympathy and prayer.

I went into a house up one of the narrow courts in the Old Bailey, and there saw a poor man ill of consumption. His wife had just returned home after trying to sell some fruit in the street, and with the few halfpence she had taken bought a loaf of bread and a little tea and sugar, and when I entered they were about to partake of this, it being all they had got for dinner. I spoke to them, asking how it was they were in such a distressing state? Does the doctor come? Do they allow you help from the house? How do you manage to provide for your sick husband? I was told he had been an out-patient of Victoria Hospital, and then of Bartholomew's, until he was too bad to go, and they would not allow out-door relief from the union, they having ordered the sick man in the infirmary. I found the man had a fearful dread of the workhouse. He said, "I can't go in, sir, I am dying, but I want to die at home." The woman said, with tears in her eyes, "I don't want him to go in the house, sir, I do my best to get him little things, but sometimes I sell such a little, as I have to-day, and then all we can get is a little tea and bread." After a few words of counsel and sympathy, and promising to send necessary help for the sick one, I went into a garret of another house where the visitor had reported a case of deep distress, the door having been taken off its hinges because they could not pay their rent, and there I found a poor young woman and three children. There was nothing in the room by way of furniture, except two or three old chairs, a table, and two dirty straw mattresses. The children had scarcely a bit of clothing

on; the eldest was afflicted with water on the brain, and the baby, not four weeks old, was clothed in a check night-gown, given by the workhouse authorities when the poor mother came out a few days before, having gone there in her trouble, and this was all the poor woman had to clothe her little baby with. I was surprised to see upon the small fire two saucepans, and fearing deception, I having entered unexpectedly, I asked what was in them, and the poor woman showed me, and said, "They are a few heads and waste pieces of plaice I had given me; we are going to have dinner;" and all they had for dinner was about a pennyworth of potatoes and those pieces of fish. I was not asked for relief, but the poor woman begged for work either for herself or husband, "We can do almost anything, and are willing to work; we don't want to go to the House. My husband went two days last week, and only had a few halfpence and a loaf of bread, and then he can't look out for anything."

From there I went to see a poor old sick man, whom I found in a most deplorable state of suffering and distress, living in one of the courts near Farringdon Street. This poor man, who had been afflicted for many years, being entirely helpless, and subject to fits, I found to be in a very anxious state of mind about his soul, and it has been my delight, through former and subsequent conversations with him, to see the work of grace begun and completed in his heart, and he having just passed away from this world, in the greatest of bodily agony, died in the full assurance of acceptance with Christ. Their lot, his wife being very old and almost helpless, had been very hard, their only help being the small pittance allowed from the union, and but for the little help given by our Mission, we fear that the poor afflicted one would more often have lacked those comforts so needful to those in his state. After a long and earnest conversation with them upon this afternoon, I went into another room in the same place, and saw a poor widow woman over sixty years of age, who for over twenty years of widowhood had kept a comfortable home about her by taking in washing, and having a small school for young children; but hard work and age had done its work, sickness had taken hold of her, work and school were gone, and she was lying apparently upon her dying bed, no friend to help her; she seemed to think even God had forgotten her. The woman knew but little of the gospel, she had paid her way, had lived a good and honest life, and she had nothing to fear. She said it was hard to be left in her state, with no one to help her. I spoke to her of the righteousness of Christ as being the only goodness acceptable in God's sight, the finished work of Christ for the salvation of the soul, of God dealing harshly with some to bring them to think of their state, danger, and the God whom they had neglected, and gently strove to lead her to think of eternity, and at once to make her peace with God. I read and prayed with her, and in parting received a pressing invitation to come again.

I visited a case, and found, ill in bed, a man sick of that fearful disease—consumption. In my first brief conversation with him, I learnt that his life had been one of ordinary uprightness, and in this he put his trust. I attempted in gentle and earnest love to show him that our righteousness was not acceptable in God's sight. I left him after a few words of prayer,

and verses read from God's Word. From his wife I learnt that he had used up in his illness the benefit of his Sick Club, and now they depended upon the wages of one son (an errand boy), and the small pittance allowed by the parish, with a little the wife was able to earn at home by book-folding, there being six in family. It was a case requiring assistance for the sick man, which we at once gave, in the form of wine, arrowroot, and meat, according as the doctor would permit. From many subsequent visits I was able to make, it was indeed wonderful to see the gradual change in this man spiritually, soon learning to feel that he was sinful in God's sight, and that good work would really avail him nothing. How eagerly he listened to the story of redeeming grace, asking for us to come again, and though two visitors were appointed for him specially, so great was his longing for the Word of Life, that he begged for daily visitation. Never shall I forget, upon one occasion, the happy look with which his face seemed lit up, and when he shook hands with me he said, "Oh, Mr. Groom, I am a changed man; I am happy in Jesus; I have given myself entirely unto Him." None who saw him after, or even heard him speak, could doubt at the change worked in his heart. Soon afterwards he was admitted into the Consumption Hospital, and there for three months testified to the truth of the change, and is at the present time living, showing forth with might of the Grace of God. In spite of all the skill and care bestowed upon him, he is drawing nearer to death, yet speaking of God's mercy, and blessing God for those sent to visit him in the hour of his need. Neither has the good work ended here; his wife has been brought to realise the same blessing in all its fulness, and during the time of her husband's stay in the hospital was regular in attendance at our religious service.

JOHN H. GROOM.

LECTURES AND LESSONS ON THE TONIC SOL-FA METHOD BY MR. JOSEPH PROUDMAN.

THE following is the syllabus of a course of lectures and lessons by Mr. Joseph Proudman, on the Tonic Sol-fa Method of Teaching to Sing, which will be held on Wednesday evenings, at Field Lane Ragged School, commencing at 7.30 precisely, and closing about 9.15:—

October 22, 1873.—INTRODUCTORY.—Rev. J. Curwen will preside.—Singing: its Power and Uses—Music and Civilisation—Music and Religion—Psalmody in Church—Singing in Schools—Methods of Teaching—The "Tonic Sol-fa Method," the Instrument for all Popular Singing, on account of its simplicity and scientific truthfulness—Its Economy—Principles of Teaching—Pattern—Its Fundamental Truth—A Key Tone, its Fifth and Third—Their Representation on Paper—The "Modulator" Notation.—Followed by Practice and Development of the "Tonic Chord," **d m s**.

October 29.—How to produce a "Good Tone," and good quality of Voice—Gymnastics of Vocal Drill, with exercises—Tonic Chord Exercises—Pitch—Mental Effect—Time and Rhythm, with practice.

November 5.—The Time Language—Ear-Training—Memory-Training—Eye-Training—Voice-Training, with practice.

November 12.—The "Dominant Chord," s, t, r—The Different "Measures"—Square Time—Triangular ditto—Divided Pulses—Halves and Half-rests—"Rounds," with practice.

November 19.—The "Sub-Dominant Chord," f l d'—The Diatonic Scale, completed—Ear, Voice, and Memory Training, as before—Modulator—Voluntaries—Tune Pointing, and practice—Pitching the Key.

November 26.—THE VOICES: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass—Their Compass—Quality—Their evident Design in Harmony—followed by Classification and Division into Parts, and practice.

December 3.—The Mental Effects of the Tones in Combination—The Chords of Doh, Soh, Fah, Lah, Ray, &c. With practice and drill as before.

December 10.—On "Force" in Singing—Marks of Expression—The "Resonances"—Speed—Metronome—Mental Effect modified by other circumstances, as pitch and rate.

December 17.—THE REGISTERS: Their Recognition and Use—Subdivisions of the Pulse—Ear—Memory and Voice Drill—Home Practice—Tune Pointing, followed by practice.

A vacation will take place here until after Christmas. The lessons will be resumed on January 14, 1874.

January 14, 1874.—TRANSITION: Dominant and Sub-Dominant Keys—The Three Keys as shown on the Modulator—followed by Oral Examination, and practice.

January 21.—The Notation of Transition—Bridge Tones—Signature, &c.—Distinguishing Tones—Articulation in Singing, with exercises—followed by Preparation for the Elementary Certificate, *i.e.*, Sight Tests, &c.

As the taking of these Certificates is most important, both to student and to teacher, there will be special opportunity afforded for the examination, which should take but a few minutes, if fairly done.

January 28.—On Tune Pitching—Time Beating—Development of Expression—Phrasing, &c.—Syncopation—Memorising the Three Keys—with Ear-Memory and Voice Drill.

February 4.—On Children's Voices—How to treat them—How to teach them—On Causes of Flattening—Children's Music—followed by practice as before.

February 11.—On the "Minor"—The "Ray" and "Soh" Modes, &c.—Practice of the "Intermediate Rhythms," and Minor Mode Phrases.

February 18.—The Intermediate Certificate: what to do to get it—and Preparation and Practice for it—The Old Notation.

February 25.—CLOSING LECTURE.—Oral Examination—The Application of the previous Lessons to the use of Schools—Concluding Practice in Singing.

Opportunity will be given to any who may be prepared to take the Intermediate Certificate, upon application to Mr. Proudman.

Tickets for the Course may be had of Mr. J. Proudman, 2, Gordon

Villas, Stoke Newington. Price, 5s. P.O.O. or Stamps. Lesson Books, 6d.

Ragged School Teachers may have tickets for 1s. each by early application to 1, Exeter Hall.

Poet's Corner.

THE DAY'S WORK REVIEWED.

"Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour, *until* the evening."—Ps. civ. 23.

ONE more day's work for Jesus—
One less of life for me!
But heaven is nearer,
And Christ is dearer
Than yesterday, to me.

One more day's work for Jesus—
How glorious is my King!
With joy, not duty,
To speak His beauty;
My soul mounts on the wing.

One more day's work for Jesus—
How sweet the work has been,
To tell the story,
To show the glory
Where Christ's flock enter in.

One more day's work for Jesus—
In hope, in faith, in prayer,
His word I've spoken—
His bread I've broken
To souls faint with despair.

One more day's work for Jesus—
Yet 'twas a weary day;
But heaven shines clearer,
And rest comes nearer,
At each step of the way.

O blessed work for Jesus!
O rest at Jesus' feet!
There toil seems pleasure,
My wants are treasure,
And pain for Him is sweet.

Teachers' Column.

THE TEACHER'S KEY.

It was on the Sabbath morning, as the day broke upon the poor pilgrims in Doubting Castle, that Christian, "as one awake," said, "What a fool I am! Am I to lie in a stinking dungeon, when I may as well walk at liberty? I have a key in my bosom called Promise, that will, I am persuaded, open any lock in Doubting Castle." That key opened the dungeon door, and, though it went desperately hard, the lock of the iron gate also, and the prisoners went forth on to the king's highway.

Have we no key of promise? What may we not ask? what not expect to receive? Augustine said of his mother, "She beset me with prayer; I could not withstand her prayers." Do we deal thus with our children — personally, privately, *individually*? Do we know what "praying and working" is? Those men who are engaged in sculpturing that solid marble architrave daily sharpen their tools, and ascend the scaffold to advance their work; soon, however, their tools are blunted, and they come down again to repeat the process.

Ours is a work worth doing well. We cannot do it without the Lord's help. Take apostolic example. The Epistles were their teachings. They begin them and close them with prayer, and the whole instruction is saturated with this spirit.

Take out *your* key, you who say you are discouraged by want of success, and overcome with doubts, and fears, and reluctances, and use it as Christian did—plead the precious promises, ask the help you need, and the blessing you lack, and wait till you receive it. Yea, "Prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Already the answer comes to the Christian teacher, "Behold, I will pour out my Spirit upon you!"

CHARLES REED, M.P.

HIDDEN JEWELS.

A CERTAIN nobleman, for political reasons, was banished from the kingdom. On the eve of departure, he called his steward, and gave into his keeping a casket of small, but very precious jewels. Years went by, and still the nobleman was wandering in foreign lands. The steward, in failing health, still faithful to his trust, sought a place of security for the costly and precious stones. Accordingly, he cut into a tender tree, and beneath its bark hid the treasure.

Many years later, the nobleman was permitted to return from his long exile. The steward was gone, but his lord knew well the secret of his deposit. Where the young tree once stood, now towered the thrifty oak, with its bark hardened and roughened by time. But well it had kept its trust. Though the firm wood had closed over it, and no eye could divine its hiding-place, it was still secure. The tree was felled, and in its very heart the gems were found; not a point broken. They flashed in the light with the same brightness as in former days, and rejoiced the heart of the owner.

Is not each lesson of truth deposited in the mind of the young, like that hidden treasure? Is not the teacher like that faithful steward? When our Lord, now banished from his rightful realm on earth, shall come again to seek his own, may not the precious jewels which the true preacher quietly and faithfully hid, be found beautiful as ever to the joy of their rightful owner? —*Sunday School Times.*

SECRET OF SUCCESS.

Some say, "Why am I so little successful in my efforts to do good? I desire to be useful. It would be a great joy to be instrumental in leading souls to Christ. The world can afford no such happiness. I have tried once and again and again, but my words have fallen powerless upon the ears of those I have addressed. While I was speaking them I had small confidence that they would prove effective, and the result has shown that they were apparently useless. Others speak, and their words are at once owned of God. They gather many sheaves for the Lord of the harvest. O that I could have like success! Why is it that I do not?"

My friend, it is right to wish and pray for success in your work for Christ. It is pleasing to him, and doubtless he is ready to help you. It is not from any unwillingness on his part to aid you, and to see you rejoicing over results so much to be desired, that you go sighing day after day because your labour is in vain in the Lord. But have you been careful to take him with you when engaging in his work? Utterly distrusting your own strength, have you rested wholly on Christ? He has said, "Without me ye can do nothing." Do you feel this in your inmost soul?

The grand secret of success is to take Christ with you; to be full of his spirit; to feel his love gushing in your heart, and to trust in him alone while you strive to do his will.

Children's Gallery.

RAGGED TOM'S THREE ENEMIES.

Tom was a poor, ragged boy. His home was an old house in a narrow court. A stool, a deal table, an old bed in one corner, and a bag of shavings in another, were all the goods contained in the room where Tom, with his father and mother, lived. Tom's hands and face were generally very dirty, his hair matted, his clothes were in rags, and his feet were without shoes. He often had nothing to eat, and no fire to warm him, however cold the day. Many were the blows and kicks the poor boy received from the rude men and lads who lived in the court.

It was well for him that a Ragged School was established in the neighbourhood, and he was invited to go. He gladly accepted the kind invitation, and went.

He there soon learned that he had three enemies of which he had not hitherto thought much. These were dirt, ignorance, and sin. He speedily vanquished the first at a pump. The second he overcame by patient effort at the school. He sought help from God, and finally conquered the third.

Then Tom became a respectable, happy, and useful young man. But best of all he had God's smile.

THE RAGGED SCHOLAR'S CARRIAGE.

Last autumn a poor crippled boy was carried by his mother into East Greenwich Ragged School. By his good conduct, and the uncomplaining way in which he bore his physical sufferings, he won the love of all.

One day, whilst the schoolmaster was giving a lesson on kindness, he said what a delightful thing it would be if the scholars were to collect sufficient money to buy a vehicle to bring this poor cripple to school, instead of his having to be carried there. The children listened earnestly--tears ran down many

cheeks, and all were eager to collect the money. One hundred cards were at once printed, each so ruled as to contain the sum of one shilling. Four days were allowed to make the collection and to bring in the needful sum. Punctual to the time fixed the cards were returned. When the pile of coppers was counted the sum collected was found to reach £6 2s. 6d. When the carriage was presented, oh, with what shouts the schoolroom rang!

Yet joyous as was this poor cripple, who was thus enabled to ride to the Ragged School in his *own carriage*, we think that the kind donors were at least as happy. For could they not echo the language of Job (xxix. 15) and say, "Feet was I to the *lame*"? Nor do we doubt that they learnt the meaning of those sweet words of Jesus, "It is more blessed to give than to receive!"

Editor's Note-Book.

SPIRITUAL POWER.

"Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you," power from on high, the baptism of the Holy Ghost. For the work of God in this day, we do require hearts true to the Lord Jesus, minds richly stored with all truth; but, in addition, above all do we require the power of the Holy Ghost, without which gifts will profit nothing.

See that ponderous locomotive engine shining in all the glory of burnished brass and iron: all its machinery is perfect, all its supplies laid in; so far as these things go it is perfectly furnished for its journey. But try to start it, it will not move an inch. Why? Is it not on the rails? Are not all its parts perfect? Yes; but the fire is not lit. All its mechanism, however perfect, is useless without the fire. But let the fuel be lit—let that furnace glow, and then the ponderous machine trembles with suppressed energy in every inch of its iron frame. The whole seems instinct with life, and at a touch of the finger, with its long train behind it, will rush on into darkness like a shooting star, the most striking manifestation of power that the hand of man has made.

Even so it is with the worker. However perfectly he may be furnished, however true his heart, however clear his intellect, however important his office, except the fiery baptism from above kindle his soul and impart divine energy, he cannot move an inch in the true path of testimony. E.

HOPE FOR THE VILEST.

It is but a few weeks since I sat by the side of one of the purest and loveliest of females, who was once degraded, but who is now at the head of a family, highly respected and beloved. We are never to be discouraged. There is no man or woman so vile but God may bring them, washed and saved, to His kingdom.—*Dr. Tyng.*

Never call a man a lost man until he is buried in a hopeless grave. No man is lost upon whom any influence can be exerted; no man is lost to whom the offer of the gospel may be brought.

INSEPARABLES.

If too many in these days of fleshly energy regard work as a substitute for private prayer, do not others make prayer a pretext for standing idle in the vineyards? As in Nehemiah's days,

both these—prayer and work—are inseparables, and must be combined if the walls of the spiritual Jerusalem are ever to be built (Nehem. iv. 9).

The following is a case in point. When the celebrated missionary Richard Knill was a student at Gosport, a religious service in one of the neighbouring villages was one day left unprovided for. The service was not popular with the students, because it not only occurred on a week evening, but broke in upon their studies. Mr. Knill, whose turn it was to offer the prayer which preceded the academic lecture, was about to commence when Doctor Bogue interposed. "Stop, Mr. Knill; we cannot pray until a supply for Elson is obtained." "I will go, sir," said Mr. Knill. "Thank you, sir," he replied; "now we may venture to approach the throne."

If, then, there are special times for prayer—that is *before*, and *after* work for Christ—there is actually a time when God seems to say to us as to Israel (Exod. xiv. 15), "Wherefore crieth [prayest] unto me? Speak unto the children of Israel that they *go forward!*"

S. A.

Facts and Scraps.

LEGACIES TO THE RAGGED SCHOOL UNION.—During the past month the following legacies have been received by the Ragged School Union, namely: Mr. Carr £25, and J. Wathey, Esq., £22 10s.

THE ROYAL FAMILY AND RAGGED SCHOOLS.—At a time when some persons are hinting that Ragged Schools are not needed, it is satisfactory to find that the Queen and the Royal Family have arrived at a different conclusion. Thus her Majesty and the late Prince Consort gave a donation of £100 to the Ragged School Union. She has since given several donations to the Aberdeen Ragged Kirk, and Field Lane and St. Giles's Schools. The Duke of Cambridge and the late Princess Sophia have also sent donations to the Ragged School Union. The Princess of Wales, too, last year gave a donation to the children's excursion of Perkins Rents. The Princesses Christian and Louise, and the Duke and Duchess of Teck, have also shown their sympathy with Ragged Schools.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL BOARDS.—At a recent meeting of the London School Board the noble chairman, Lord Lawrence, referred to the statistics of education in London, which he stated were full and complete. He also said that "voluntary schools are *needful* to complete the educational machinery of London." By renewing his liberal annual subscription of £10 to the Ragged School Union he has practically shown his opinion that he considers that Ragged Schools are doing no small part in supplying the educational wants of London.

LONDON PARKS.—To the list of parks contained in our last number we are glad to find that there is to be an addition, for Mr. John Gurney has offered the eastern district of London a park of 80 acres, well timbered, for £25,000, towards which he guarantees that members of his family will subscribe £10,000. In addition to this Mr. Gurney expresses himself willing to allow half of the balance to remain on mortgage for five years.

TEMPERANCE HOSPITAL.—For some time past the establishment in London of a temperance hospital has been contemplated. The Committee have succeeded in obtaining suitable premises

for the hospital at 112, Gower Street, near University College. All the members of the medical staff are total abstainers. The annual expenses are estimated at from £1,500 to £2,000, for which sum several hundred indoor patients can be lodged, fed, and receive efficient nursing and medical treatment.

Wayside Seats for Labourers.—"Rosalind" writes to the *Daily Telegraph* on this subject:—"When the drinking fountains were established, would not the comfort of those they were intended to serve have been greatly increased if seats had been placed beside them, or as near as possible without hindering the traffic? How large is London! How many weary miles have our working men and women to walk—often heavily laden—not rich enough to ride, to whom the drinking fountain so charitably provided would be doubly welcome if they could rest and enjoy it. Fatigue rather than thirst must be their most common grievance, and for that the only relief is the public-house. . . . Among the many improvements that are being made, would it not be possible to place sheltered seats in our smaller streets leading to the great thoroughfares and suburbs?"

Religious Education and School Boards.—At a large and influential meeting of Evangelical Nonconformists in Birmingham, it was agreed to constitute a society, to be called the Birmingham Religious Education Society, the object of which shall be to provide Evangelical religious instruction for children attending Board Schools. It was also resolved that the society shall, as far as possible, provide religious instruction by the agency of voluntary teachers, and shall pay to the School Board such a rent as may be agreed upon for the use of the school buildings. A committee of leading Nonconformists was appointed to draw up the rules of the society and a scheme of instruction, and to conduct the business of the society until its annual meeting, and they were empowered to add to their number as many ladies and gentlemen as they may think desirable.

Drovers' Hall and Asylum is the designation given to a reading and club-room recently opened by the Lord Mayor, the Baroness Burdett Coutts, Lord Tredegar, and Alderman and Sheriff White, at the Cattle Market, Islington. It is intended to provide lectures and other means of improving this neglected class of men. The hall is in connection with the Drovers' Benevolent Institution, which is intended to provide a home for such as are disabled by age or accident.

Rain and Health.—The *British Medical Journal* says that without doubt a swampy condition of the ground is not conducive to health; yet notwithstanding, as the returns of the Registrar-General show, the present rainy season in London is a season of almost unparalleled healthiness. The reason appears to be, that the purification of the atmosphere, which is brought about by the rain, far outweighs in sanitary effect the disasters due to damp clothing and damp dwellings, whilst the very perfect drainage of London insures it against being converted into a swamp even in the most rainy of seasons.

St. Giles' Medical Mission.—Some idea of the extent of this evangelistic effort may be gathered from the fact that in three months 967 new patients have applied for medical advice and attended the gospel addresses. The new and old together during the same period amounted to 4,778, while the visits by the Medical Superintendent to patients in their own homes numbered 1,303. This Mission is thoroughly practical in every respect, not only by ministering to the suffering bodies of the really destitute in their homes of wretchedness, at the same time endeavouring to avoid any pauperising tendency, but, above all, in making known "the gospel of Christ."

Notices of Meetings.

MILTON YARD, ISLINGTON.

The seveteenth annual meeting and distribution of prizes in connection with Milton Yard Ragged School was held in Holy Trinity Schoolroom, Cloudesley Street. The Rev. J. Rooker, Vicar of Holy Trinity, presided. A number of boys and girls attending the school, and who were to receive prizes, were ranged on the platform.

Mr. R. Bradley (Hon. Secretary) read the report, in which the Committee stated that through the liberality of the friends and subscribers to the schools they were enabled to commence the year not only free from debt, but with a fair balance in hand. Under the management of the new master great expectations were entertained of restoring the school to its former renown. The Sunday Evening School, which had been closed chiefly through the lack of teachers, was about to be reopened under new superintendence. The Penny Bank had been well patronised. Through the kindness of the Religious Tract Society about thirty to forty books had been presented to the Library, which were lent out as an incentive to good conduct and attendance. The Mothers' Meeting had an average attendance of about twenty. During the year the scholars had purchased upwards of 20 Bibles, which they had supplied to them at the reduced price of sixpence. The committee made an earnest appeal for teachers both for the Boys' and Girls' Schools.

The Rev. H. J. Berguer, Vicar of St. Philip's, Arlington Square, was not surprised to find the school flourishing notwithstanding the School Board, and he, for one, did not believe that this great educational movement would, at least for some years, interfere with genuine Ragged Schools. The Ragged School reached a class not touched by the School Board. Mr. Berguer mentioned that he had been a Ragged School teacher for two years, and gave an amusing description of his experiences in connection with the establishment of a Ragged School in Bagnigge Wells Road. The boys at first could not be got to sit quietly, and one evening the gas was suddenly put out, and the teachers almost suffocated in consequence of lighted cayenne-pepper being placed in the key-hole. When a light was procured the teachers were further enlivened by the presence of a number of rats and mice, which the boys had brought and let loose. However, all this was overcome, and the boys became attentive scholars. As an instance of the acuteness of these outcasts, the speaker mentioned that on one occasion he was illustrating the parable of the wheat and the tares, and pointed out that the two could not live together, and that they must decide which they would be, when one urchin roared out, "You're a liar; the farmer lives all his life there." (Laughter.) Mr. Berguer concluded by giving some affecting instances of the good effected through them.

PERKINS RENTS, WESTMINSTER.

The sixteenth annual meeting of this Ragged School was held in the Schoolroom. The Earl of Shaftesbury presided.

The report stated that plain needlework continues to be carefully attended to, a number of boys' shirts, flannel blouses, &c., being made in the school for distribution after Christmas.

To test their capabilities an industrial exhibition was held at the Working Men's Club, Old Pye Street, and was very successful; all the articles, about

400 in number, were made by the young people, seven being in service, and consisted chiefly of useful clothing of every description, also knitted and netted articles, pincushions, &c., and models from the boys; also paper flowers; and there were specimens of darning, marking, writing, &c. There was also an interesting exhibition of flowers reared by the children in their own homes. There were 67 general exhibitors and 45 of flowers; 79 prizes of money were awarded, of which 39 were given for needlework, the youngest exhibitor being only six years of age, who had also some very creditable writing. Forty-five prizes were given for flowers. The value of the prizes was £6 10s., and the amount of sale of the articles, nearly £20, after deducting simply the cost of the materials, was given to the young workers as an encouragement to industrious habits and a reward for diligence. One very great need at the present time is increased assistance in the Sunday School, the classes being far too large for the proper instruction of the children. A class of children is taken by one of the mothers, and a youth who received a prize for his good conduct in employ is also a Sunday-school teacher. The sum of £7 14s. 10½d. was paid into the Clothing Club by the children, and between five and six hundred religious periodicals, books, &c., have been sold to the children at less than half price, in order to counteract the trashy literature sold in the neighbourhood. One hundred and twenty-five children are members of the Penny Bank connected with the "One Tun" Band of Hope, and £26 was deposited and withdrawn at Christmas. The Mothers' Meeting is held in the schoolroom on Monday evenings. The cost of materials amounted last year to £92 8s. 10d., towards which the mothers paid £65 14s. 1¾d. The Boot Club continues very useful—as soon as one is completed another is commenced—so that no less than two hundred and fifty pairs of boots have been paid for.

In the course of the evening a pair of slippers, a sofa cushion, and a "cosy," made by the children of the school, were presented to the noble Chairman. A silver biscuit-box was also presented by the teachers, parents, and scholars, to Mr. and Mrs. Barker Harrison. They were also presented by the members of the Working Men's Club with a handsome case of stuffed birds as a memento of their marriage.

VINCENT STREET, OLD STREET ROAD.

A special meeting of an unusually interesting character was convened at the above Ragged School on Sunday evening, the 14th of September.

This Ragged School includes well-worked Sunday and Day Schools, a flourishing Penny Bank, Band of Hope, Mothers' Meeting, and Mission Services, and is doing a good work in a district well known for its squalor and wretchedness. It is deeply indebted to the Sturt family, not only for the use of the building, but for liberal support to its various operations. The object of the gathering was that the scholars might receive the Bibles presented by W. Marchant, Esq., a gentleman well known in the district for his Christian liberality. He also kindly presented a beautiful desk, Bible, and hymn-books suitable for the Mission Services. This novel meeting was largely attended by parents and scholars, and a spirit of devotion seemed to pervade all, whether old or young.

Short but pithy addresses on the "Excellency of the Holy Scriptures" were given by Messrs. W. Marchant, Livingston, Wardell, Williamson, and R. J. Curtis.

Papers, Original and Selected.

ADULT WORK IN RAGGED SCHOOLS.

Those who imagine that the labours of the Ragged School teacher are restricted to children, have but a meagre conception of the objects of their promoters. Their primary aim, doubtless, was to save children, or to reclaim street boys and girls; but whilst they do that, they do something more. For they include adults as well as babes in their great mission.

Ragged Schools had not long started on their career of usefulness before it was found that no small portion of the lessons of virtue and religion taught in the school was *un*-learnt at home. For many parents, not excluding, alas! the bulk of the mothers, who ought to have trained their offspring for God, taught them, if not by direct precept, at least by indirect example, to disobey the laws of God and man. Thus drunkenness, swearing, pilfering, and fighting were the rule in their miserable hovels. Hence "there's no place like home" had a different meaning to that intended by the popular lyrist—for home was a curse rather than the best of earthly blessings.

These and similar facts led many of our earnest workers to see that if their work was to be fully done, it must be so broadened out as to reach, if possible, the hearts and homes of the fathers and mothers of our scholars. When it is stated that year by year this work among adults has so grown as to include about 10,000 persons, it will be seen how great is our social influence among what Dr. Chalmers aptly styled "the lapsed classes" of this great city. To some of these operations, which amount in the aggregate to upwards of 300, we propose briefly to refer.

Penny Banks.—Nothing has done more to teach the parents the duty of self-restraint as a mean to self-help than our Penny Banks. Habitually spending to-day what could be easily done without till to-morrow, when sickness laid the bread-winner low, or the casual labourer could not get any work—starvation or the parish was the necessary result of such improvidence.

But Penny Banks have shown not only the wisdom of saving against "a rainy day," but what was equally essential, *how* to do it. Receiving sums as small as one penny, when the Post Office Savings Banks do not receive less than one shilling, and being without those complicated rules which puzzle an outsider as much as a railway time-table, they have met the special exigencies of a most needy class. The number of depositors and the total paid into our 93 Penny Banks last year are somewhat startling: and yet no one who has visited them can have the shadow of a doubt that they are confined to a really poor class of persons. Last year there were no less than 30,395 depositors. The total amount deposited was £8,423 15s. 7d. But at Christmas, when the deposits are usually withdrawn, only £1,610 9s. 9d. remained to their credit —or in other words, the average yearly saving was little more than one shilling!

Clothing Clubs.—This admirable agency has had the influence of teaching neatness and industry to scholars once dirty and ragged. But it must not, however, be forgotten that, though the sums paid into most Clothing Clubs are deposited by children, yet that in the bulk of cases the money is supplied by their parents—and thus really, though not nominally, adults are the subscribers. Many, indeed, of these Clothing Clubs are attached to Mothers' Meetings; and in those cases the nominal and real depositors are the same persons.

We are glad to intimate that Clothing Clubs are connected with about sixty schools. The sum paid in last year reached £927. Being all expended in really neat and useful articles of dress, these clubs were a *silent* teacher against that love of tawdry finery to which many poor mothers are so prone, and which, so far as girls are concerned, means moral ruin.

Mothers' Meetings.—Foremost amongst our social agencies is the Mothers' Meetings. These have so long been a prominent feature in the machinery of Ragged Schools that there is no occasion to state that these gatherings are as much missionary as social. To most, Clothing Clubs, Maternity Societies, or Sick Clubs are attached: and thus acting as Provident Societies, they are of a real social benefit to the charwomen, fish-hawkers, and labourers' wives who form the staple of the membership. In all, in addition to regular reading and comment on the Bible, works bearing on domestic management and the training of children

form no slight part of the evening's reading. They are usually superintended by two ladies—in some cases aided by Bible-women—one of whom reads whilst the other cuts out and directs the needlework. In every case, the meeting closes with prayer; and in most with a short address, on family duties and home piety. There are now nearly 80 of such meetings, with an average weekly attendance of 2,706.

FATHERS' MEETINGS.—Fathers' Meetings or Clubs are of more recent institution, but are of equal value to the gatherings of mothers. The seven clubs or meetings have an aggregate attendance of above 500. Most are simply Provident Clubs—adding, however, a Bible Class or religious service. But to two of the largest, Reading Rooms and Libraries are attached. Open every evening, under proper oversight, they have served to wean many labourers from that curse of poverty—the Gin Palace.

RAGGED CHURCHES.—This sketch would not be complete without a reference to that more direct evangelistic work which the very name "Ragged *Church*" implies. The attendants are mostly not only the poorest of the poor, but often the vilest of the vile. Amongst the more respectable attendants are shirtmakers, charwomen, dock labourers, and fish-hawkers. But in others—three of the largest especially—the bulk of the congregation consists of beggars, casuals, harlots, and thieves. Their aspect is as painful as their dress is *outré*. And certainly if they felt disposed to enter an ordinary church or chapel we doubt whether they would be permitted to remain.

It is for these and similar pariahs that the first London Ragged Church was organised in 1852, and with eminent success. Not only is the behaviour of these strange flocks all that could be desired, but hundreds have been saved from the "wrath to come" through the benediction of the Holy Spirit on the proclamation of that simple Gospel which declares that man is nothing and Christ everything.

It is gratifying to the pioneers to know that the number of services has increased year by year, and that they show no sign of decay. Thus 72 Ragged Schools are now opened for Divine worship, mostly on the Lord's Day—the united attendance being 5,906, or an average of 83 persons. Three of the largest, indeed, attract about 1,300 every Sunday morning.

Other efforts for the social weal of adults—such as Dorcas

Meetings, Coal Clubs, and Maternity Societies—might be referred to, did space permit. But sufficient has, we think, been adduced to show that if Ragged Schools had been restricted to adults, they would still have done a work for society the value of which cannot possibly be exaggerated. It is in this sphere of labour that our labours will be long demanded. For, if the School Board should eventually bring home elementary instruction to every poor man's door, still the need to teach the denizens of "slum" and den *how* to become good citizens, will be as great as ever. Our Divine Master said, "The poor ye have with you alway, and whensoever you will, ye may do them good,"—and this axiom will, doubtless, hold true at least till that millennial age, of whose dawn, however certain, we see but few signs. Till then, we would labour on in the assurance that God will be true to us, if we are only faithful to Him!

SPIRITUAL GRAPE-GATHERING.

BY REV. T. L. CUYLER.

SITTING to-night, sick and weary, a little note has just been put into my hands, which commences as follows:—"I cannot forbear expressing to you the deep-felt gratitude of my heart, that you have been the means, in God's hands, of the conversion of my dear brother G——."

We lingered over every line, as one would pull off one grape after another from a purple cluster of the vintage of Eshcol. Each grape went to the right spot—like the juice of Solomon's clusters, "which goeth down sweetly, causing the lips of those which are asleep to sing."

These are the true Eshcol foretastes of heaven. Every working pastor —every faithful toiler for Jesus knows them. There is a sweet satisfaction in working for souls; and a still sweeter one in gathering the fruits of our poor labours. Dear is the spiritual vine which we water with our tears; dearer still are the ripe clusters which the vine doth yield under the sunbeams of God's Spirit. We call to witness the humblest and obscurest Christian minister, if he would exchange the joys which thrilled his soul when some new-born child of grace has been led by him to Jesus for all the laurels which Webster won in the Senate-house, or a Wellington on the field of Waterloo? "I feel that I have goodly lordships and possessions in those places where my spiritual children dwell," wrote old John Bunyan from his prison. "Ye are my joy and my crown," wrote the grateful Paul to his spiritual offspring beyond the Hellespont. And so has many a pastor, as he gazed at the ripening vineyard before him, been ready to exclaim, "For what is our hope, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even YE in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ? For ye are our glory and joy."

These are the motives to send young men into the ministry. These are the inducements to make Christian laymen *work*. The satisfaction which toils for Jesus bring to the pastor, to the mother, and to the teacher, never abate their fragrance, or lose their sweetness. The vintage of Eshcol grows more and more aromatic with the lapse of time. Without the refreshment of these grapes to his parched tongue, how could the lonely western missionary endure the hardships of his frontier cabin?

That is a touching picture in the closing days of Henry Martyn, when he went out at eventide, to seek repose under the shadow of some spreading trees at the foot of the Caramanian mountains. "I sat in the orchard," he says, "and thought with sweet comfort of God—in solitude my company, my friend, my comforter. Oh! when shall appear that new heaven and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness and love!" Already on these feverish lips the grapes of the kingdom were distilling their exquisite flavour; within ten short days Eshcol was exchanged for that shining shore, where his thirsty soul drank of the fruit of the vine in the Paradise of God.

Blessings and thanksgivings for these valleys of foretaste! We reach them in our most unselfish hours of work; we reach them in our humblest and holiest hours of worship. After a long, tiresome, distracting day in the strifes of the store and the street—amid the wrangles of the money mart, and the jabber of the bargain makers, how balmy breathes the air of an earnest, delightful prayer-meeting! How the fragrance of Christ, the *Vine*, fills the atmosphere! And when we go home from the hallowed spot to our dwellings, we carry—like the spies of Israel—"a huge cluster upon a staff, and bring also of the pomegranates and the figs."

Christian men of business! these are trying times to many of you in the life-march. Some streams of wealth are running dry. Many an once prosperous cistern has become a "broken cistern." But not a pound given to Christ has yet been lost. Your own gourd (like Jonah's) may be blasted; but the grapes of Eshcol hang as mellow and purple as ever on the vines.

It is time to gather them. He who prays the most fervently, and toils the most faithfully for Christ and perishing souls, will bring home the *premium clusters* on his pilgrim staff.

ITALIAN RAGGED AND MISSION SCHOOLS.

WHEN a friend inspected an aviary he asked, "How is it that your birds are so tame?" The apt reply was, "I catch and train them when they are young." Upon this principle the earnest evangelists of Italy seem to act; for, though adults are not overlooked, by Mission Schools, answering to our Ragged Schools, they are doing their utmost to win the young for Jesus. Thus, for example, the ancient church of the Waldenses, in addition to their schools in their native valleys, have established above twenty Sunday and Day Schools in different cities of Italy, including its recovered capital Rome. In conducting these schools and preaching to the poor, upwards of forty teachers and evangelists are employed. Nearly all the attendants at these free schools are of Romanist parentage.

Recently the Italian Free Churches, amongst whose leaders Gavazzi is prominent, held a Conference. From the report of this gathering, which represented upwards of thirty churches, we glean the following particulars of what is being done in their Mission Schools:—

Mr. McDougall, the head of the Florentine Mission, stated that this church has between thirty and forty different evangelistic stations. Few can boast of large numbers in attendance at Protestant worship; some only having fourteen, sixteen, or eighteen communicants, and twenty to forty children in the schools. The despotism of the priests, the superstition of the people, and the petty persecution to which converts are exposed, account for this. At Florence there are fifty members of the church, and forty children in the schools. There are also thirty-three orphans of gospel labourers in Italy, in an asylum conducted by Signor Ferretti. At Leghorn, from 200 to 300 attend the meetings now, great interest having been excited in consequence of some bitter attacks made by a Jewish priest on the evangelicals.

Signor Gavazzi, in his report on Rome, said "that we gather together in this place the finest Sunday School in Rome. It has been in existence since 1871, but it has now assumed the regular proportions of the best Sunday School among our Protestant brethren abroad. We gave here the first example of classes and of monitors, being perhaps the only denomination that could do so just now, with full justice to the cause. The reason why is very simple and without pretence. Having in the place four distinct rooms, which serve for our Day Schools, we are able to divide the classes, and keep them separate from each other, thus avoiding noise and confusion; while our sound proselytism of two years' standing affords us a good many willing teachers, both male and female, ready to spend their talents to nourish these tender plants of Jesus. The average of children is generally three hundred, sometimes even more; and more it will be in future from the recruits of our daily schools."

A visitor to this Free School thus writes in *Evangelical Christendom*:— "The school connected with this church is one of the best I have visited in Italy, both in organisation, discipline, and course of instruction. On special occasions, when the school has appeared before the public with recitations of Scripture and moral truths, and the sweet religious songs which never sound more sweetly than when heard from the lips of Italian children, all hearts have been moved with emotion and gratitude. More than one eye have I seen filled with tears for the new hope born for Italy through the consecration of the children of the land."

Mrs. Gould, too, an American lady, has established a Ragged Day School in the very heart of Rome, which has succeeded beyond all expectation. The scholars are of both sexes, varying in age from four to eleven. Whilst in school their ragged attire is concealed by a clean gingham pinafore. The poorest, in imitation of English Ragged Schools, receive a meal at noon; the only food, indeed, which stands between many of them and starvation.

An interesting report has also reached us of the 200 children at the Mission School in Turin, supported by the widow of the late Dr. Desanctis.

The school is considered a Protestant propaganda by the Jesuits, who try to injure it in every way. The brother of the Archbishop of Turin, who is the Royal Inspector of Elementary Schools in the Turinese district, lately visited the establishment, and could find no fault beyond the smallness of the *locale* and the mixture of boys and girls in the same schoolroom. On leaving he met a mother who was bringing her own children and those of her neighbours to school. Stopping her he inquired if she was a Protestant, to which she replied that she was not. "Why then," said he, "do you bring your children here? Have we not plenty of other schools, that you must bring the children here, where boys and girls are taught together?" The mother replied that she did so because it was the best, that she had already sent four, who were now doing well in the world, and that she would advise every one who had children to send them to this school. As for the *morale*, to which he referred so slightingly, she assured him there was nothing to fear, for the teachers were zealous in superintending the children, seeing that all went, and that their conduct was good. "You won't remove your children, then?" asked the inspector. "No, sir," replied the woman. "Then remember," added he, "that you must give an account to God of your action." "Just so," she admirably replied; "and it is for *this very reason that I continue to send them here!*"

In addition to these efforts to reach the wants of the poor children of Rome, another has been recently instituted akin to that of the English Refuge. Leaving his celebrated "Home for Little Wanderers" at New York in safe hands, Mr. Van Meter has transferred his work among poor juveniles to the capital of Italy. Being very successful—for from the outset candidates for the Home pressed in from all quarters—the hatred of the Ultramontanes, who regard "ignorance as the mother of devotion," was excited to a white heat. It is a pleasing feature in this movement that the scholars of American Sunday Schools are the chief subscribers to the funds of Mr. Van Meter's institution.

As regards conversion, many interesting facts might be recorded. But Signor Gavazzi thus writes, in words which may well be pondered by all who are engaged in Ragged Schools at home:—"The difficulties inherent in all missions, and especially in a country like Italy, make conversions slow and almost imperceptible to Protestant eyes; and yet, in my firm belief and long experience, they are the best and surest of all. I dislike the so-called conversions in a block, which to me appear generally a rank hypocrisy, and nothing else. Those who have regard to such charlataneries may enjoy multitudes of formalists, but will never obtain a solid flock of true believers. I therefore prefer to proceed slowly in our proselytism, in order to be well assured as to their real conversion, and their constancy in the new life. However, we must be thankful to God, who in little more than two years, by golden tokens of his encouraging assistance, has crowned our humble labours in old Papal Rome even beyond our most sanguine expectations."

These and similar facts give us every hope for the future of beautiful Italy. It is pleasing indeed to find a country so long crushed under the

hoof of the Papacy thus standing erect in gospel freedom, and that at a time when Anglican perverts are disgracing their country by "pilgrimages" to the shrine of a mad Frenchwoman, the success of whose machinations could only end in national ruin.

A VISIT TO HOUNDSDITCH.

"HOUNDSDITCH!" not a very nice name, neither suggestive of a very nice place, is well known as the "Jews' quarter" in London. Leading out of it on either side are many small streets and narrow passages.

I have had occasion to visit what is called the "change" and its vicinity more than once. I remember one Sunday morning taking a friend, who could hardly believe such a place existed. We found thousands of people dealing in old clothes of every description. Here it is that stolen goods find a ready sale. Here it is that the pickpocket (if not too well known to the police) finds a ready market for his dishonest possessions. A deafening noise exists for hours, occasioned by the continual shouts of the sellers. Men, women, boys, and girls, all take a part. Some of the scenes are past description. You hear at the public auction Jews selling their goods, uttering most fearful oaths and expressions, which the customers and lookers-on seem greatly to appreciate. It would be impossible for me to give a faint idea of what goes on in this place every Sunday morning.

It was in this street, one bitter cold evening, as I was walking towards home from the City, that I met a poor boy, whose shirt was in rags—it had no sleeves to it; his trousers were all in shreds, and pinned to keep them together. Two minutes before I met him a policeman told him he must not walk about in such a state. I was walking fast, and had passed almost without looking at him, but his bare feet on the cold pavement attracted my attention. I returned, and stopping him, said, "Well, you are a pretty-looking fellow." At which he just looked at me from under his eyelids, for he was walking in a cramped position, as tramps usually do. You cannot speak to any one in the streets of London without soon getting a crowd round you, so having asked a few questions, among them, whether he would not like work—for you must not talk about Homes or Missions to a London Arab, or you lose your boy—he said, "Yes, sir." I then gave him my card, and told him to call and see me in an hour. Punctually at the time he made his appearance, but not as I left him, for in the meantime some one had given him a coat. He said, "A gentleman gave it me after you left me, and he also gave me a piece of bread, the first I have tasted to-day." Having had a bath, we gave him some clothes, and after a good meal, took him over to the Home, and gave him a bed for the night. The next day we procured him work, and he is now happy in our Home.

The following he has since related to me:—"I am fifteen years of age. I ran away from my mother, who lived at ——, two years ago. I have a father and a little sister four years old. Father don't live with mother

'cause they drink so. I went to Manchester and worked in an iron-foundry, but they failed. I then walked on to Liverpool, begging as I went. I could get no work, so I tramped on to Wolverhampton. I had great kindness shown me on the road. One lady at a farm-house gave me some bread and milk, and let me sleep in the barn. I used to sleep where I could while tramping. Sometimes I did not get enough money to pay for a lodging. I then went on to Birmingham, but not obtaining any work, I took to begging. It paid very well till the 'Bobbies' began to know me, and I shifted my quarters to Coventry. Still being unable to get anything to do, I resolved to tramp to London, which I did, and have been here about a fortnight. When you met me I was just off into the City to see if I could beg a penny or two from gentlemen leaving business to get a bit of bread and a night's lodging. I believe I should have been dead in a week from starvation, if you had not taken me up."

Friends, surely to rescue such a lad is a happy reflection. He tells me he never heard anything about Jesus until he heard it in our school. When he first attended our meetings he would sit and look with astonishment at the speaker, and when singing, he would laugh and wring his hands as if for joy, everything seemed so new to him. God grant that he may ere long be like many in our mission, a lover of the Lord Jesus Christ.

EDWIN H. KERWIN.

LONDON NEWSBOYS' HOME.

FROM the *Christian World* we abridge the following interesting sketch of the London Newsboys' Home:—

A great deal is to be said on behalf of the little ragged urchins that have always infested the streets of the metropolis, and who, it is to be feared, in spite of all the efforts of the Ragged Schools on the one side and the police on the other, always will. At times they take to selling newspapers; at times they go in for cigar lights; some combine the two vocations. After the evening papers are sold off, and the demand for cigar-lights is over, these small boys indulge in symposia of their own, where they can swear, and fight, and smoke, and ape the vices which make some of us ashamed of humanity itself.

Yet these ragged newsboys are, in their way, useful members of society; and it would go hard for some of the evening papers if their vocation were suppressed, or were they forbidden to make the noisy streets of the metropolis still more noisy with their "Hevening Hechoes." It is difficult to say what is the real profit made by these itinerant dealers. A wet evening is a terrible calamity for them. A war, or a large fire, or the Tichborne case, or a race, creates an immense demand for the articles in which they deal. If they have small profits, they have quick returns, and that is the modern way of doing business. At such times they have a chance of getting up a step or two on the social ladder. I know of one young lady in this line who began with the ordinary dozen or so of the *Echo*, who soon worked her way up by saving a little capital, and starting in the wholesale

line. She bought the papers by the quire, and retailed them to a lot of boys, and I believe she did very well. Her plan was to give credit, and it was rarely she made a bad debt.

Many of these boys, if they were steady, surely might get on. They must have many chances. A gentleman in a hurry, for instance, or of a liberal turn, or flush with his money, very often will throw a boy a penny for the *Echo*, and not wait for the change. Very often a purchaser will buy a paper, just look at what he more immediately requires, and then give it back again to the newsboy, who has thus another chance of selling it. In such cases a boy ought to make far more than he requires for his daily wants. It is not in an expensive style that the newsboy generally lives; nor is he very choice as to his associates.

And this brings me to the immediate object of this paper—to make known to my readers the advantages of the Newsboys' Home, established in Commercial Buildings, Gray's Inn Road. As we enter by gaslight we find ourselves in a large hall, on one side of which is a lavatory, where certain young gentlemen are employing soap and water with a will, and certainly not before it is wanted. On the same floor is a bath-room, of which all the lodgers make use once a week. We ascend the stairs, and are ushered into the dining-hall, very large and lofty and bright with gas. At one end of the room is a refreshment bar, where the boys are supplied with what they require, and where they pay twopence for the night's lodging, or a shilling a week. Living is not dear. From the tariff I learn you can have a pint of coffee or tea for a penny, half a pound of bread for the same price, and butter and soup are charged just the same. For the 2d. per night, you are free of the amusements of the place, which are literature, draughts, and dominoes.

The superintendent and his wife seem to take an interest in their *protégés* or patrons. I am glad of it. The life of most of these lads is a sad one. No boys are admitted above sixteen years of age—many of them are much younger—yet here they are thus early thrown upon their own resources, and left, each one of them, to fight the battle of life on his own account. One thinks of his own youth, and shudders. What would you have been, my good sir, had you been turned loose, and untrained, and penniless, and ragged, and hungry, on the streets of London? I find most of the boys here to-night have neither father nor mother; are alone—God help them! —in the world. Above the dining-room is a schoolroom, which is used in the winter for the instruction of the lads, and on Sunday evenings all the year round they are read to. Above are lofty and well-aired sleeping apartments, where a deputy sleeps, who has charge of the boys. At ten o'clock the house closes, and after there is no admission. The rules are—to be orderly, to use the bath, and not to smoke or to use bad language. The place has now been opened two years. In the first year the number of lodgings was 11,948. In the second year the number had grown to 18,646. Many of the boys received here are drafted off into other institutions; 44 have been sent to the Chichester; 24 to other homes; 73 have enlisted in the Red Shoeblack Brigade; 4 have joined other brigades; several have been provided with situations; 39 have been taken away; 41 have been

expelled for bad conduct. One of the institutions of the place is the savings bank, which is a counter, with small slits, each of them numbered. Each boy has a number, and drops in what he likes into the slit with his number. Every week the superintendent takes out the money, which is generally from three to four pounds. That 1,400 boys have resorted to the place since it has been opened, shows how great was the need of such an institution.

CHRISTOPHER CRAYON.

JACQUES BOURDEAUX, THE CHIMNEY-SWEEP.

A CHRISTIAN gentleman in Paris, being in need of a chimney-sweep, went, accompanied by his son, to look for one. In one of the poorest lanes of the city they found the signboard of "Jacques Bourdeaux, Ramoneur" (chimney-sweep), and, following its direction, they found him dwelling in a little garret. Pausing at the half-opened door, they saw the man with his wife and children seated around a table, while the eldest boy was reading a chapter of the Bible. Unwilling to interrupt the exercise, they waited till the father explained the chapter, and then, as they all knelt down, prayed with much fervour and power of spirit. The gentleman then entered the room, and taking the clean hand of the sweep, said, "My brother, I praise God for the knowledge you have of the Saviour, and for this testimony to our most holy faith in the heart of your family."

Jacques stood silent and embarrassed by the seeming praise of his visitor; but the fellowship of kindred hearts soon made him at ease, and, apologising for the humbleness of the chairs, he asked the father and son to be seated. He gave this account of his life:—

I never knew the sweetness of a mother's kiss, said Jacques; my parents forsook me the very day I was born. A poor labourer, who lived in a village eight miles from Paris, cared for me. He sent me to school, and taught me to read the Word of God. He left nothing undone to bring me up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. But, alas! I grew in sin as I grew in years, found pleasure in the company of the vicious, delighted in lying, swearing, and even in thieving from my benefactor, while I made a mockery of his piety. At last my progress in depravity reached such a height, that my aged protector was forced to send me away to gain my daily bread, and apprenticed me to a chimney-sweep in this city.

On the day before that fixed for my departure, the good old man took me apart, and said: "Before you go, it is needful you should know that you are not our child. My wife found you one morning at our door, in a little basket, and took you in. We tried in vain to discover your parents, and kept you, receiving in our great poverty some help from others in maintaining you. You know how you have rewarded our pains, yet we love you. But those who have taken an interest in you refuse any longer to aid us, and I am obliged to apprentice you to a chimney-sweep, for no other will receive you. You will go to Paris with your master to-morrow. Oh

that I could say, 'This poor boy will be happy, for he is a child of God!' But no, you are without the fear of God. However, so long as I am in this body, I will pray that you may be made a new creature in Christ."

The old man's gracious words touched my heart a little, and I felt ashamed of my ingratitude and wickedness. I felt, too, some pain at leaving my benefactors, and the calling of a chimney-sweep was distasteful to me. Yet I thought it a good opportunity to see Paris, of which I had heard such wonderful stories. For the first few days the sights of the city gave me pleasure. But they soon lost the charm of novelty, and I was very wretched. My master was a hard man, and ill-used me, and I was exposed to the cruelty of my fellow-apprentices. I became more and more depraved, till such was my degradation, that the lowest of chimney-sweeps were ashamed to be seen in my company.

One morning, while it was yet dark, I was sweeping a chimney, and thought it would be good fun to go from roof to roof, and frighten the poor people in the garrets, by tapping at their windows. As I was in the act of tapping at the first window, I slipped, and fell from a height of six stories to the pavement. I returned to consciousness in a hospital, with a broken arm, a broken leg, and other serious injuries. My first thought was, "What would have become of me if I had died in that moment?" All my sins rose before me. I remembered the despised instructions of my benefactor, and the farewell admonitions which I had till then forgotten. I felt as if I were already on the brink of the lake of fire. For the first time I thought of God and his judgment; I remembered also what I had heard of the Saviour of sinners. I cried to the Lord all that night; but as the conviction of sin deepened, I said aloud, "How can such a sinner as I am obtain mercy?"

A cobbler who lay on the bed next to me heard my distress, and said, "The Lord is very merciful. I, too, have been a great sinner; but I have found mercy of God. To-day he is calling you, 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'"

"Is it possible? Am I not too sinful?"

"No," answered the cobbler, "it is to sinners that the word of God offers pardon. It is because you are wounded that you need a surgeon and it is because you are a sinner that you need a Saviour. On the cross the Lord Jesus satisfied divine justice for sin."

My broken limbs had been skilfully set at first, and as soon as the inflammation was over, I gained strength rapidly, so that I was soon able to sit up and enjoy the godly conversation of the cobbler, who was full of the love of God. The great sorrow of my heart now was that I should soon be dismissed from the hospital, and return to my ungodly master, and thus lose the instruction of my friend. In the meantime he was very faithful and kind in instructing me. The time, however, came when I had to leave him; but so long as he lived, I returned to the hospital every Sunday, and passed an hour with him in reading the Word of life. By depriving myself of many things, I gathered a little money together, and soon had the joy of having a Bible of my own.

I began to speak of Jesus to my companions. At first some accused

me of hypocrisy, others said I was mad, others mocked me; but God was so gracious as to give me the privilege of seeing some of them brought to the foot of the cross. Among these was Louisa, the daughter of my master. At the end of my apprenticeship my master suddenly died, and Louisa was left friendless. As I knew my master's customers, I continued the business, and soon after we were married. God blessed our union, and gave us three children, whom we endeavour to bring up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. The Lord has been with us until now, and we know that he will be our Guide and Friend all the journey through.

UN-PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY.

THERE are many theorists, but few practical Christians. Creeds are numerous, "living epistles" scarce. Profession is popular, but *doing* costs something, and only here and there do you find one willing to pay the price. You have no trouble to get men to advance an opinion, but it is not so easy to get the advance of money, or personal influence and work, to carry out the opinion into practical life.

A great many will criticise, analyse, and syllogise, who will not do as Christ did—"Go about doing good."

Viewed from a practical standpoint, is it not amusing to hear one who never visits the poor, in one of our costly churches, where the poor never come, preaching a sermon on "Evangelising the Masses," from the text: "The poor have the gospel preached to them"? (Matt. xi. 5).

Conferences meet, and wise delegates and grave counsellors draft resolutions on temperance—thoroughly discuss the subject—grow warm and eloquent, and, apparently, zealous in speaking, and adjourn, having theoretically checked intemperance. But these very delegates never take a poor drunkard by the hand, and by personal influence or association help him in his efforts to reform. Is not this one form of the *un*-practical Christianity of the day?

Revivals of religion, and the conversion of the soul, are the subjects under discussion at prayer-meetings. Some advise what *ought* to be done, others pray that it *may* be done—but sinners are not addressed personally, and entreated, persuaded, warned.

If Christians were what they professed, and if their lives were a corroboration of their profession, the world would soon be converted to God. The profession is often far in advance of the living. This explains the lack of power in the church. The strength is wasted in a boast instead of being the reserved power for the fight. The work is done in fancy, when the reality is overlooked. This is an age of "novels," and religion is also becoming fictitious. There are many dreamers, revellers, and *spiritual epicures* in the church—where are the labourers?

"If any man will *do* His will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." "Return to thine own house, and *show* how great things the Lord hath done unto thee."—*N. Y. Methodist.*

Poet's Corner.

ONLY.

Only a drop of *water*,
To a thirsty outcast given:
Though a simple act of kindness,
Twas registered in heaven.

Only a gentle *breeze*—
A single breath of air;
But it pierced a dreary hovel
And lessened the load of care.

Only a little *star*,
Casting a feeble ray;
Yet while the moon was hidden
It showed travellers their way.

Only a simple *smile*,
From eyes as true as kind;
But, oh, it healed a broken heart,
And cheered the weary mind.

Only a *word* was spoke
To the lost in faith and love,
When a gem was added to the crown
Given by Christ above!

Teachers' Column.

HINTS ON TRAINING.

Old Roger Ascham, the tutor of Queen Elizabeth, gives the following valuable hints on training children. Though primarily intended for those engaged in secular instruction, they are equally suitable to those who are engaged in Sunday Schools.

Praise.—I assure you there is no such whetstone to sharpen a good wit and encourage a will to learning as is *praise*. But if the child miss, either in forgetting a word, or in changing a good for a worse, or misordering a sentence, I would not have the master either frown, or chide with him, if the child have done his diligence, and used no truantship therein. For I know by good experience that a child shall take more profit of two faults gently warned of, than of four things rightly hit.

Free to Ask.—Let your scholar be never afraid to ask you any doubt, but use discreetly the best allurements ye can to encourage him to the same; lest his overmuch fearing of you drive him to seek some misorderly shift, as to seek to be helped by some other book, or to

be prompted by some other scholar, and so to go about to beguile you much and himself more.

Gentleness in Admonition.—If your scholar do miss sometimes, . . . chide not hastily, for that shall both dull his wit and discourage his diligence; but monish him gently, which shall make him both willing to amend, and glad to go forward in love and hope of learning.

The True Motive Power.—In my opinion, love is better than fear, gentleness better than beating, to bring up a child rightly in learning.

Smart Children.—Quick wits commonly be apt to take, unapt to keep; soon hot and desirous of this and that, as soon cold and weary of the same again; more quick to enter speedily, than able to pierce far, even like other sharp tools, whose edges be very soon turned. Such wits delight themselves in easy and pleasant studies, and never pass far forward in high matters. . . . They be like trees, that show forth fair blossoms and broad leaves in spring time, but bring out small and not lasting fruit in harvest time, and that only such as shall fall and rot before they be ripe. . . . Amongst a number of quick wits in youth, few be found in the end either very fortunate for themselves or very profitable to serve the commonwealth, but [they] decay and vanish, men know not which way.

Dull Children.—A wit in youth, that is not over dull, heavy, knotty, and lumpish, but hard and rough, . . . such a wit, I say, if it be at the first well handled by the mother, and rightly smoothed and wrought, as it should, and not overthwartly and against the wood, by the schoolmaster, both for learning and [the] whole course of living, proveth always the best. In wood and stone, not the softest, but [the] hardest be always aptest for portraiture, both fairest for pleasure, and more durable for profit.

Youth Naturally Willing to Learn.—If ever the nature of man be given, at any time more than another, to receive goodness, it is in [the] innocency of young years, before that experience of evil have taken root in him. For the pure, clean wit of a sweet young babe is, like the newest wax, most able to receive the best and fairest printing; and like a new bright silver dish never occupied, to receive and keep clean any good thing that is put into it.

Memory in Children.—Memory, the only key and keeper of all learning, is readiest to receive and surest to keep any manner of thing that is learned in youth. . . . We remember nothing so well when we be old as those things which we learned when we were young; and this is not strange, but common in all nature's works. Every man sees, as I said before, new wax is best for printing; new clay, fittest for working; new short wool, aptest for soon and surest dyeing; new fresh flesh, for good and durable salting.

DEALING WITH ANXIOUS SCHOLARS.

THE multiplication of anxious scholars is an end to which every Ragged School teacher looks eagerly. For religious anxiety is the germ whence eternal results for good may come. When this much of spiritual exercise is experienced, we may properly look for its progression unto the perfect day of conversion and of full consecration to Christ.

But the anxious scholar frequently needs leading. He knows not whither to go nor how to go. He looks very properly to his teacher as a helper, and his teacher should be fully prepared to render help. But how can such scholars be most wisely aided?

In the first place, he who attempts to lead an anxious scholar must have clear conceptions as to the end to which his leading tends. With perfect docility that pupil's hand is placed in the teacher's; and sad indeed is it if teacher and pupil together go on wandering,

seeking rest and finding none. Beware then of *vagueness* as to the point which an anxious pupil needs to reach. The easy advice to press on, to strive to enter in, not to look back, to pray, to read the Bible, to be good children, &c., may all be observed so far as they can be by flesh and blood, and yet no solid peace be gained.

The sole point for the seeker is Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. Pupils may linger near Him as He stops to teach, or to do His wonderful deeds of love and mercy, His words and works may be wrought ineffaceably in their memories, and yet, until they see Him *crucified*, they do not see Him in the fulness and richness of His saving work.

Let Christ's blood be the point to which we lead, and let it be distinctly taught that whatever delays the footsteps thither—be it only doubt as to acceptance—is really sinful. All doubts as to personal fitness, as to one's readiness to accept wholly and at once, or even all hesitancy because of the immensity of guilt, must be reckoned as sinful, because impeding obedience, and implying distrust of Him.

To Christ crucified, then, strive to lead every anxious, doubtful, or sorrowing one. With undoubting faith sweep away every obstacle which is found, and trustfully lead on till Jesus gives His perfect peace.

Children's Gallery.

THE SILENT BEGGAR GIRL.

On a bitter cold, wet day a gentleman was passing through one of the London squares, when he saw a poor girl with but little clothing on to shelter her from the cold piercing wind; her face was very pale and thin, and bore all the marks of hunger and privation. So weak was the poor child, that she was obliged to rest herself against the iron railing surrounding the square. She did not beg, but simply held out her thin hand and exposed for sale a box of matches. The sight was enough to melt the hardest heart. The gentleman crossed over and spoke kindly to the child, and finding she was perishing from cold and hunger, he told her to come to his house, which was close by. She came, and was furnished with a supply of food, which was soon devoured. Her case was then inquired into, when it appeared that her father had been dead many years, and had left a widow, two girls, and a boy. The mother had struggled to bring up the children by going out charing when she could get it to do, but of late she had been reduced to utter destitution and was compelled to send out this girl to sell matches so as to obtain a few pence. The girl having expressed great willingness to enter the Refuge connected with St. Giles's Ragged School, the address was given, and she was requested to tell her mother to take her there. At the time appointed the mother was there with the girl and with a second daughter, and so earnest were the entreaties of the poor widow on behalf of her two girls, that the Committee received them both with a view to rescue these poor girls not only from a beggar's life, but probably from that which would be a thousand times worse.

Before, however, the girls came into the Refuge, it was thought advisable for the secretary to visit the place where the woman and girls were located. He found the spot in a narrow court without any thoroughfare, in a sad neighbourhood close to St. Martin's Church. There, in a room about 10ft. square, he found mother, grandmother, the two girls, and a young woman, of questionable character, with a baby. The scene was most wretched. There were two old chairs, no table, bed,

or bedstead, but in one corner of the room lay a bundle with a covering over. The contents of this bundle were all these five human beings and the baby had to rest their weary bones upon when night came. The ages of the girls are fourteen and twelve. They are well-behaved, and bid fair to become useful servants.

CHARLIE'S BAZAAR.

A TRUE STORY.

"See, Charlie, here is poor old Mrs. Baker's basket. You choose me something out of it whilst I go and look for an old jacket I have got for her." Charlie took the little brown basket from his mother, and lifting the clean white cloth off the top, spread the contents on the table. There were two or three smart match-boxes, a large pincushion, some pen-wipers, and some bundles of tissue paper leaves to hang on gilt picture-frames. Charlie was looking at them with a very puzzled air when his mother returned.

"Well, Charlie, what have you chosen?"

"Mamma, just look! They're all such rubbish I don't know what to choose."

Mrs. Wilson looked at the things sadly. "Poor old woman!" she said, "and yet that rubbish is all she has to get her living by. We must have the pincushion and a pen-wiper."

When the old woman was gone, Mrs. Wilson came back to her little boy.

"Charlie, we must really try and do something for that poor woman. Don't you think *you* could?"

"I wish I could, mamma; but you know I have no money."

"Didn't I hear you say something about a bazaar a few days ago?"

"Oh, yes; I see! I can have a bazaar and give her the money, that would be famous. But you know I can't make many things myself, I'm afraid I should get very little money!"

"I will help you, and I'm sure your sisters will, and you must be very industrious yourself. If you don't have it till Easter you will have time to do a good deal."

Charlie Wilson was just eight years old. He was rather a delicate boy, and he learnt his lessons with one of his sisters instead of going to school, and so he had more playtime than most boys of his age. His brothers and sisters were all much older than he was, and having no one to play with he often amused himself with woolwork, and other work of that kind. He now set to work and made book-markers, and painted pictures, which one of his sisters pasted into a book she made of pieces of coloured calico; he worked kettle-holders, and cut out bits of cloth and flannel for his mother to make into iron-holders; and those were such useful things, he said, every one was sure to buy them. Then his sisters did him some tatting, and made some pincushions, and needle-books, and other little things; and so when Easter came, Charlie found the box in which he kept his things for the bazaar was nearly full. Easter Tuesday was the day fixed, and as soon as breakfast was over Charlie began to prepare his bazaar. First he arranged a quantity of boxes on the sideboard, so as to form steps, then a clean cloth was spread over all, and then the things were arranged on the steps. Everything had a little ticket pinned to it with the price marked plainly; and Charlie was careful that the things should be very cheap, and then he said he should be sure to sell them all.

About half-past eleven the visitors began to arrive, Charlie's aunt and little cousin, and four or five of her own friends whom Mrs. Wilson had allowed him to ask. They thought he had got some useful things, and soon his "stall," as he called the sideboard, was nearly empty; and one lady who came in rather late was so disappointed at not finding a kettleholder left, that she ordered another one. Altogether the bazaar was a great

success, which we do not wonder at, for Charlie both worked for it and prayed about it. And when poor old Mrs. Baker came next day, Charlie had nine shillings ready for her, which pleased her very much; indeed, she said it was so kind of the young gentleman to take the trouble of *selling* the things as well as *making* them for her. The old woman never forgot to pray for him, and he was the instrument in God's hands of adding much to the comfort of one of His own children. And Jesus has said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me." Reader, think of the privilege of doing things, even the little things, *unto Jesus*. E.

Editor's Note-Book.

SHADOWS WE CAST.

In this great world of sunshine and shadow, we are constantly casting shadows on those around us, and receiving shadows from them in return. There is no pathway in life which is not sometimes in the shade, and there is no one who walks over these paths, it matters not which way they tend, who does not, now and then, cast his shadows with the rest.

How often do we, by a mere thoughtless word or a careless act, cast a shadow on some heart which is longing for sunlight! How often has the teacher, by a harsh reproof, chilled the ever-flowing spring of confidence and love, which is bubbling up from the fountains of the heart of the innocent prattler at his knee. How often are the bright rays of hope torn from the clinging grasp of the souls of those worn out by poverty and by the never-ending conflict of life, by the stinging ridicule, or the sordid avarice of those whom the world honour. Beware, then, lest you cast a deeper shadow over those which are already darkening his happiness.

The shadows we cast—can we escape them? Can we not look back, as we walk on in life's journey, and see no shadowy marks about our footprints? No—not so long as our humanity remains bound to us by chains we cannot break—not so long as that humanity is of "earth, earthy."

Then let us be more guarded in our thoughts, in our words, in our actions. We cannot expect to cast no shadows. Let us try to throw rays of genial sunshine over our way, to dissipate and brighten up the shadows which are thrown around us. Let us leave pleasant memories to those whom we leave behind when we pass away from earth for ever.

SABBATH HOMES.

A happy home, in which God is recognised as a Father, and Jesus spoken of as an ever-present Friend, is indeed a type of heaven.

But there are thousands of children whose homes are only places where they eat and sleep. There are thousands who shiver in garrets or burrow in cellars. There are thousands whose homes are places of terror, darkened by the brutality or vice of parents, whom they fear but do not honour.

To these the Ragged School is especially an ark of refuge. They look eagerly forward to its hour of sunny brightness, to the cordial grasp of the teacher's hand, to the welcoming word on the teacher's tongue. Oh! how glad they are when the silvery chime of the bell summons them to their weekly place of

pleasure, where they are taught the blessed lesson that somebody loves them.

Somebody! Yes, there is a heart large enough to hold every forlorn child, a hand stretched out to help every despairing one! Fear Jesus! How can the children keep from loving Him?

Teachers, do your best to make the children's "Sabbath home" the place from which they shall learn to "look unto Jesus."—*S. S. Times.*

MISSED TREES.

When an oak, or any noble and useful tree is uprooted, its removal creates a blank. For years after, when you look to the place which once knew him, you see that something is missing. The branches of adjacent trees have not yet supplied the void. They still hesitate to occupy the place formerly filled by their powerful neighbour; and there is still a deep chasm in the ground—a ragged pit—which shows how far his giant roots once spread. But when a leafless pole, a wooden pin is picked up, it comes easy and clean away. There is no rending of the turf, no marring of the landscape, no vacuity created, no regret. It leaves no memento, and is never missed.

Brethren, which are you? Are you cedars planted in the house of the Lord, casting a cool and grateful shadow around you? Are you palm-trees, fat and flourishing, yielding beauteous fruit, making all who know you bless you? Are you so useful, that were you away, it would not be easy to fill your place again, but people, as they pointed to the void in the plantation, the pit in the ground, would say, "It was here that that old palm-tree diffused his familiar shadow, and showed his mellow clusters"? Or, are you a peg, a pin, a rootless, branchless, fruitless thing, that may be pulled up any day, and no one care to ask what has become of it? What are you contributing to the world's happiness, or the church's glory? What is your *business?*—*Dr. Hamilton.*

Correspondence.

PREACHING TO PARENTS OF RAGGED SCHOLARS.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

Dear Sir,—Will you permit me to bring under your consideration a suggestion made at the Mildmay Conference in reference to parents, which it is hoped will, with God's blessing, meet an acknowledged want in many of our churches?

While one cannot be too thankful for the increased efforts now being put forth for the religious instruction of children in our Ragged Day and Sunday Schools, it is yet felt, especially by the teachers themselves, that at present far too little attention is given to the parents—to those who are the first and most influential of all teachers—for the purpose of awakening them to a deeper sense of their solemn responsibilities, and for their enlightenment in the duties connected with the parental relationship. That the need of increased labours in this direction is very great, is but too

obvious. "I have long felt," remarks the Earl of Shaftesbury, "that, until the fathers and mothers are better men and women, our schools can accomplish comparatively little. I believe that any improvement that could be brought to bear on the mothers, more especially, would effect a greater amount of good than anything that has yet been done."

As a very important means of meeting this great want of our times, it has been thought desirable to bring the subject under the immediate notice of every faithful minister of Christ's Gospel, submitting for their consideration the desirableness of their preaching, every two or three months, a sermon *specially addressed to parents*, and occasionally urging on them the great importance of using the family institution for Christ. The suggestion has commended itself to a number of earnest and experienced workers in the Lord's vineyard, and it is hoped that, ere long, it will meet with very general approval.

On behalf of millions of dear helpless little ones who, it is well known, are receiving serious and lasting injury from the ignorance or unfaithfulness of their parents, I entreat your earnest and prayerful consideration of this subject. Should you deem it advisable to act upon the above suggestion, or should any other course commend itself to your judgment as more desirable, a line to that effect will be esteemed a favour by your obedient servant,

JOHN GROOM.

Heath Street, Hampstead, W.

LEICESTER RAGGED SCHOOL.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

SIR,—Enclosed you will find the last printed report of "Leicester Church of England Ragged School." It may be interesting to your readers to hear of the progress of Ragged School work in the provinces.

Our school originated about seven years ago, when an invalid lady took a few gutter children to teach at her home. Since then it has rapidly increased, being known at various times as the Belgrave Gate, Church Gate, and Yeoman Lane Ragged School, the locality being changed as the numbers grew or other necessities forced us to leave. Our present school is held in Wharf Street, in a public building known as the Gladstone Hall, which we are pleased to say has been secured for a number of years. It was formerly a concert-hall and dancing-saloon, and had an unenviable reputation, being connected with liquor vaults, which still exist on the ground-floor of the building. Theatricals, too, were performed in it. We have reason to thank God for being able to secure it for a better purpose, and hope that good may flow from our present efforts to counterbalance the evil which its former use occasioned.

We look upon it as a stronghold of the enemy gained by us, and situated in the very midst of his camp, and we hope by-and-by to secure the whole of the building for better purposes,

The school is supported by public subscriptions, and our operations, as you will perceive by the reports, are numerous, though as we have not been in possession of our handsome hall many months, there has been scarcely time to develop all our work.

The Sunday School is open morning, afternoon, and evening. In the morning as a Children's Service; afternoon, ordinary Class Teaching; evening, Service for Parents and their Children. A Week-day School is also carried on, and an Evening School during the winter months.

Sewing Classes, Mothers' Meetings, a Library and Savings Bank, Singing Classes and Saturday Evening Entertainments are carried on, and Public Lectures, chiefly on religious questions, given from time to time in the hall.

We take your Magazine and read it with pleasure, and hope that our humble efforts, which from so small a beginning have by praying, working, and trusting in God, increased to some importance, may encourage other labourers in their difficulties and discouragements.

I am, Sir, yours respectfully,

Leicester. A COUNTRY SUBSCRIBER.

Facts and Scraps.

EXETER BUILDINGS RAGGED SCHOOL.—The Night School is attended by many friendless boys. Though mostly in work, the wages are too small to permit them to pay the usual rent demanded for a bedroom. In order to prevent these lads resorting to low lodging-houses, the committee have rented a house adjoining the schoolroom. Two rooms are fitted up as bedrooms for six boys. Each has a separate bed and the use of the kitchen. For this each pays one shilling weekly.

CROYDON RAGGED SCHOOL.—This school employs an expert needlewoman to teach the girls sewing every afternoon. Among other products of their skill they have just completed a "Scripture patchwork quilt." On this quilt many texts are neatly worked in marking cotton. It is about to be presented to the Croydon Hospital as a token of gratitude for the kindness experienced by the master during a recent severe accident.

PRAYER FOR SUNDAY AND RAGGED SCHOOLS.—In addition to most Sunday and Ragged Schools setting apart a portion of Sunday, October 19, for special prayer for their schools, in upwards of one hundred and sixty London churches and chapels sermons were preached in connection with the above movement. Above forty of the ministers so engaged are either specially identified with or have publicly advocated Ragged Schools.

SCHOOL BOARDS *v.* VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS.—At a recent meeting of the London School Board the noble chairman said that "he believed there was a feeling outside that they were, more or less, hard in the operation of their rules and regulations on the voluntary system. He thought they ought not to do anything which tended to the destruction of the voluntary system, as the competition of the voluntary schools with their own was calculated to have a good influence on both." We presume that it is in conformity with this statement that the School Board visitors regularly

obtain a list and then visit the homes of absentees from Ragged Day Schools.

RAGGED SCHOOL FLOWER SHOWS.—As some Ragged Schools hold flower shows, we are glad to announce that the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Works and Public Buildings intend to distribute this autumn, among the poor of London, the surplus bedding-out plants in Battersea, Hyde, the Regent's, and Victoria Parks, and in the Royal Gardens, Kew, and the Pleasure Gardens, Hampton Court. If school committees will at once make application to the superintendents of the parks nearest to their respective schools, or to the director of the Royal Gardens, Kew, or the superintendent of Hampton Court Gardens, in the cases of persons residing in those neighbourhoods, they will receive early intimation of the number of plants that can be allotted to each applicant, and of the time and manner of their distribution.

LONDON SCHOOL BOARD.—The election for the London School Board is fixed for November 27. Many of the present members of the Board will not stand for re-election, including the two lady members. In the Chelsea division alone three of the present members will probably retire, namely, Lord Lawrence, Canon Cromwell, and Mr. Kiell. In the Tower Hamlets mention is made of the retirement of one or more members. Finsbury, Southwark, Marylebone, Greenwich, and Lambeth will also have their contests.

OUR FIELD OF LABOUR.—Our readers may form some idea of the extent and urgency of our work from a leaflet just published by the City Mission, entitled, "Can you Influence the World for Christ?" "Are you a Scotchman? There are about as many Scotch people and their descendants in London as there are in Edinburgh. Are you an Irishman? There are more Irish and their descendants in London than there are in Dublin. Are you a Welshman? The Welsh and their descendants living in London about equal the united populations of six of the principal Welsh towns. Or are you an Englishman? The population of six, eight, or ten towns in some of the English counties represent the number of persons *born in those counties* who now live in the great city. You may thus act upon almost every city, town, and village in the United Kingdom by means of their own representatives now living in London."

BIRMINGHAM RELIGIOUS EDUCATION SOCIETY.—This society, which has been established for giving evangelical religious instruction in Board schools, has adopted a provisional scheme of operation. The following are the fundamental principles:—The doctrinal instruction given by the teachers of this society shall include those truths which are held in common by the churches generally known as evangelical. The society shall rely as far as possible upon the agency of *voluntary* teachers. The society shall pay to the School Board such a rent as may be agreed upon for the use of the school buildings. The leading features of the scheme are as follows:—That the society shall endeavour to obtain from the School Board permission to use the school buildings during school hours upon two or more days in each week, the society providing the necessary books, maps, pictures, &c. Lessons from the Holy Scriptures will be prepared for the use of the teachers. It is also proposed to institute a preparation class for those teachers who may be willing to attend and hold periodical examinations of the schools under instruction. A considerable number of competent ladies and gentlemen have offered their services to the society as teachers.

ADULTERATION OF FOOD ACT.—As the health of the poor is so seriously affected by the adulteration of necessary food, we are glad to find that not only is the recent Act to punish adulteration being rigidly enforced, but that many are deterred from this social crime by fear of the penalties. Thus Dr. Tidy, analyst of food for Islington, reported to the

vestry that, "I examined seventy samples of milk, and gave certificates in eleven cases that the milk was adulterated with water. In no case, except a little salt, did I find any other matter added. As a proof that the prosecutions in these milk cases have been of very considerable benefit, I may add that the last twenty samples of milk I examined proved to be very superior in quality to those I previously analysed. I have also examined twenty samples of bread, and it is a matter for congratulation that only in four cases did I find alum. The amount in these even was small, and therefore no action was taken."

DECREASE OF LONDON PAUPERISM.—Last month the total number of paupers in the metropolis was 106,742, of whom 35,250 were in workhouses, and 71,492 received out-door relief. Compared with the corresponding month in the year 1870, these figures show a decrease of 33,773.

BRITISH NOMADS.—The digest of the census returns, issued by the Statistical Society, furnishes some interesting particulars of those human waifs and strays who make a point of being present at fairs, races, reviews, &c. It appears that on the 3rd of April, 1871, the census enumerators found throughout the country 1,921 males and 437 females who had slept during the preceding night in barns and sheds, and 4,325 males and 3,700 females whose places of repose were caravans and tents, or under the open canopy of the sky. It is satisfactory to observe, from the digest referred to, that there is a gradual diminishment in the numbers of the ascertained houseless class. In 1841 they amounted to 20,348, in 1851 to 15,764, in 1861 to 11,444, and in 1871 to 10,383.

COLPORTAGE.—The Colportage Society connected with the Metropolitan Tabernacle now employs nineteen agents. "This," says Mr. Spurgeon, "is growth; but if good people knew the worth of the agency they would soon increase the number to ninety or more. No better work is done under heaven."

Notices of Meetings.

BLENHEIM ROAD, HOLLOWAY.

THE fourth annual meeting of this Ragged School Mission Church was held on the 30th of September. The Rev. J. P. Gladstone presided. Mr. Sale, the secretary, read the annual report, which stated that the Children's Services on Monday evenings had an average attendance of 99. Open-air Services were held during the summer on the waste ground in Blenheim Road, especially at the time of the Alexandra Park races, and it was felt great good had arisen from them. On many occasions the number assembled could not be less than 400 or 500, and at the last meeting, after the proceedings, a prayer-meeting was held in the chapel, at which 200 persons attended. The Sunday School, under a band of earnest, faithful teachers, had been in constant operation, and the numbers had steadily increased. The numbers were—in the morning, teachers, 7; children, 46; afternoon, teachers, 20; children, 146. The Library was likewise much used, and appreciated by the children. The Night School was held during the winter for those who did not come under the Education Act, but the usefulness this work was much curtailed for want of additional teachers. The book-stand for the sale of pure literature was still

carried on. The average of periodicals sold monthly was about 90. The Boot and Shoe Club, the Christian Instruction Society, the Benevolent Fund, Mothers' Meetings, and the Girls' Sewing Class, had been severally carried on. The Penny Bank was still in a flourishing condition. Since its opening, in 1870, there had been nearly 1,800 accounts opened, and the number of depositors was now 503, with an average of 140 depositors every Saturday. The Blenheim Institute, for working men, has been continued. During last winter there was opened, by Mr. Holder, a coal shed to supply the poor and needy with coal at 1s. per cwt., and there was sold in this manner seven tons of coal; thus a great comfort was provided for eighty families. In the month of May a Tract Society was formed, and since that period there had been distributed 5,846 tracts, besides 2,000 at the camp and out-door services.

The meeting was addressed by Rev. C. Brake, A. Hall, R. Henry, Mr. C. E. Mudie, &c., &c.

ROCHESTER PLACE, KENTISH TOWN.

THE sixth annual meeting of this school took place in the schoolroom, and was the most successful ever held. The Rev. E. White presided.

The spacious room was crowded in every part; and the proceedings were of a most satisfactory nature. The Flower Show consisted of geraniums, fuchsias, calceolarias, and various other plants reared by the children, and of bouquets of wild flowers, all of which had been tastefully arranged round the room, and which, in conjunction with the evergreens and flowers presented by the Baroness Burdett Coutts and Miss Bodkin, imparted quite a cheerful and holiday aspect. There were upwards of one hundred children present, all of whom were exhibitors of their own flowers, prizes varying from 3s. 6d. to 3d. being awarded, the highest of which were given for geraniums and fuschias, kept by the children through the winter, the successful competitors being decided by a gardener from the Botanic Gardens.

The report said that the Day School is attended by about 90 boys and 110 girls, whose ages vary from 3 to 12 years, the Night School being attended by no less than 300 persons, many of whom go to work through the day. Two evenings a week are given to the boys, and two to the girls. Many up-grown children attend this school. A number of ladies and gentlemen assist in teaching, and in other ways manifest an affectionate interest in those who attend. A Sunday School is held in the building, and there is a special meeting on Sunday evenings for boys only.

KINGSLAND.

A SERVICE of song, of a most interesting character, was held in this Ragged School on Monday, the 6th of September. Mr. R. J. Curtis presided.

Mr. Hoon, the Superintendent of the Sunday School, very adroitly improvised a platform, on which were gathered forty children and some twenty teachers and friends. About 300 of the parents were also present. Mr. Hoon conducted the musical part of the entertainment with his usual energy; Mr. Lidstone read the story with great feeling and propriety of emphasis; and the harmonium was played by a lady. The service of song entitled "Joseph" was given.

This novel entertainment, which occupied one hour and a quarter, was most successful. These delightful meetings occur once a month: and during the intervals the members of the choir are frequently and well practised on week evenings.

Papers, Original and Selected.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF THE RAGGED SCHOOL UNION MAGAZINE.

As the first number of this Magazine was issued in January, 1849, this number completes a quarter of a century of its regular publication.

The object of the Committee in issuing this Magazine—however diverse the plans adopted—has never varied. At first, the conductors had to battle for the very basis of the Ragged School movement—namely, that there was a class in all our large cities which, from dress, manners, or morals, was far below that which formed the staple of British and National Schools; and that, if they received any secular instruction at all, it must be given in special institutions, and that it must be wholly free. The founders had little difficulty in proving that very many of these poor children of neglect were, if not social outlaws, from home-training or street-education always on the verge of crime. They were also called to prove that for such classes even special Sunday Schools were required, as children of better disposed mechanics or labourers would scarcely care to associate with those whose dress and language showed too well how far they were down the social ladder. Nor was it the least of the aims of the conductors to prove, from Bible precedent and Bible doctrine, that all true Christians ought to and could, without any dereliction from principle, unite in this great work of saving the souls of the destitute, irrespective of differences in church discipline or of ritual.

In every respect these principles are now generally recognised, for the many facts recorded in these pages showed that theory and practice were as one. If few save extreme secularists are now found to dispute the value of Ragged Schools, it is simply because men who loved Christ more than sect, and valued souls more than their own personal comfort, stormed alley and den Bible in hand, and won this, the greatest of modern social battles.

To show how rich our special work has been in machinery, and not less in the population embraced, we cannot do better

than compare the Ragged School movement as it was prior to the publication of this magazine with its present aspect. For nothing is more remarkable than the *Then* and the *Now*—the infancy and the manhood of Ragged Schools.

In the year 1848 there were less than eighty institutions in London, whilst the movement in the provinces had scarcely commenced. Now—notwithstanding the almost panic-fears of many that the action of the London School Board would decrease subscriptions—180 institutions are affiliated to the Ragged School Union. Then, the average attendance of scholars was below 8,000; whilst now, on Sundays alone, nearly 30,000 are attracted to our schools, and about 20,000 are on the registers of our week day or night schools. In 1848 the number of voluntary teachers was only 850—now, they are no less than 2,882, of whom upwards of 2,000 seek to bring the young to Jesus every Lord's day. Before the issue of this serial there were no Penny Banks, Clothing Clubs, Parents' Meetings, or Ragged Churches—now, these social and missionary operations alone number nearly 300. Then scarcely anything was done by Ragged Schools to meet the spiritual and social claims of the parents. But now it is estimated that above 10,000 parents are embraced by our various agencies for adults. And so we might proceed, and by including Dorcas Societies, Coal Clubs, Sick Funds, Barrow Clubs, &c., make the contrast between 1848 and 1873 still more palpable. But we forbear, for we think enough has been indicated to show, if steady growth is any sign of health, how serviceable Ragged Schools have been in healing many of those social ulcers which, if unchecked, prophesied the degradation, if not the ruin, of our country.

In this onward march we have done our utmost, by sketch, by chronicle, and by the initiation of novel plans, to make every project for the social and spiritual reclamation of our social waifs and strays not only a suggestion, but a success. For it was simply in conformity to the earnest desire of the Committee of the Ragged School Union that sketches of the work and of the workers have been from the very outset so freely inserted in this Magazine. Thus, too, new departments of labour have been pointed out—for the success of one plan speedily suggested others of an equally aggressive character. Hints, too—not rarely suggested by the officials of the Union, as well by local workers—

as to machinery and method have been supplied, such as in many cases tended to render the voluntary teachers fitter for their work, and to elevate the platform on which they laboured.

Nor has our serial—as became the only organ of Ragged Schools—been restricted to sketches of London Schools. Hence, year by year notices have been given of kindred work in the provinces, Scotland, and Ireland, as well as in France, Italy, Spain, India, and the Colonies. In all these places we gladly reported that a good work was being done to gospelise the young by means of kindred Schools.

That our labours have not been in vain many facts testify. Correspondence, from Plymouth in the west to Liverpool in the north, and even embracing Scotland, Ireland, the United States, and Australia, show how widespread has been the influence of this Magazine. Its original sketches, too, have been freely copied by the Home and American press, and thus an interest in Ragged Schools has been aroused in quarters which our Magazine would not have otherwise reached. Nor least in its beneficial influence have been the sums contributed to the local and general funds through the appeals or sketches which have appeared in its pages. Not a few of these have been reprinted by the local friends, to the great benefit of the local effort.

It is scarcely needful to intimate that, like all organs of religious societies, this Magazine was not issued on a commercial footing, although its regular sale is superior to most similar serials. But its cost, we believe, has been recouped in other ways. For example, its publication nearly supersedes the use of advertisements, and of those occasional papers which the acknowledgment of subscriptions would otherwise demand.

The new face put upon education by the establishment of School Boards, as well as the experience of twenty-five years, necessarily suggests some alterations in the contents of this serial. Thus it is hoped to devote more space to local efforts—to the suggestions of new plans or methods; and to the narration of those cases of usefulness which, by the blessing of God on the means employed, have from the outset marked the history of the Ragged School movement. In this way it is hoped to make the Magazine more acceptable to our fellow-labourers, and to increase the number of those who are not yet consecrated to this great home mission.

We need scarcely say that our future materially depends upon the aid given by local workers. Hence suggestions for the extension or improvement of machinery will always be welcome, especially in the pages devoted to Correspondence. Facts, too, which are now limited to the circle interested in the local Ragged Schools, will always be received as "welcome guests." In an age when the agents of Romanism are disgracing their manhood by pilgrimages to shrines of pretended miracle-workers, surely we are bound to publish those truer miracles of the Holy Spirit whereby vice is changed into virtue, and moral deserts bloom like a very garden of the Lord.

In order, too, to bring the work of the Committee of the Ragged School Union more prominently before their subscribers, a selection from its proceedings will probably be published every month.

These improvements will commence with the January number, which will be issued as the first of a New Series.

ONE OF MY BOYS.

BY A RAGGED SCHOOL TEACHER.

JOHN SULLIVAN was not one of the worst boys in the school. His father was a cockney Irishman, and his mother—was just a match for her husband. Both were Roman Catholics, and both drank a little now and then. The father was a very sickly-looking man, in a decline, so he said, but he is alive now, and seems just the same as ever—but still upon the strength of his weakness he received parish relief.

If any blankets were to be lent, you may be sure Mrs. Sullivan was amongst the first applicants for them, and if any soup was to be disposed of, Mrs. Sullivan was sure to get a ticket somehow. I said they were Roman Catholics, and so they were if you asked them; but they never, by any means, were known to refuse relief from Protestants, so that they could not be called bigoted. They had a curiously genial and social mode of existence; for instance, if Mrs. Sullivan went out washing or cleaning, or if Mr. Sullivan got an easy job of work, or if John picked up a shilling or two, they made a common fund of it, and concluded invariably with a general state of drink.

From this little description it will be seen that the Sullivan family were of a very ordinary everyday sort of character, neither strange nor rare.

John came to the school and generally behaved pretty well—in fact he was rather dull, and somewhat inclined to be stupid, but this is easily accounted for. When he had work and could afford it, he used to invariably get drunk, and many a time he has laid his head on the step of the

school on a Saturday night and found himself there when consciousness returned with the dawn of a Sunday morning—then in the evening he could not be expected to be very bright or cheerful, and as a matter of fact was generally exceedingly dull. And thus it happened that I had never marked him for a genius. In fact, if I had been asked to point out one of the boys upon whom it was likely to make the least impression, I should have said John Sullivan.

One Sunday evening John had been to school, and afterwards had gone for a walk. Passing along the Traffic Road, the principal road in our neighbourhood, he saw a crowd of people, and joining it to see what was going on, found himself listening to a preacher. Now the preacher was not a reverend divine, but a converted coal-heaver—and perhaps I had better define what is meant by a coal-heaver. When a collier arrives in the river laden with coals, a gang of men go on board; tackle is fixed up, and a rope with a basket is rove through a block, and about six men walk up an improvised ladder, and having hold of the ropes jump off the top step, and thus jerk the basket laden with coals out of the hold to the side of the vessel, and its contents are emptied into a barge. Such was the preacher's daily vocation. The nature of this employment is to produce a tendency to thirst, and hence in my parish coal-heaver is synonymous with drunkard.

This is a queer sort of school for a preacher, but when the Spirit of God changes a man's heart and puts a new song in the individual's mouth, he can afford to dispense with many a luxury, that some deem needful, in the way of theological education.

John listened to the converted coal-heaver, and felt a strange heaving in his own heart. He began to reason to himself in this wise:—"There's Bill Jackson who lives down our street, once he was a drunken scamp and used to kick his wife, now he's turned religious and he's a good man—why shouldn't I be religious too?" And the more he thought it out, the more persuaded did he become that "Bill Jackson was best off, after all said and done." So he went to hear Bill again—and now he listened and heard strange things. He found that what he had heard in the Ragged School out of the Bible, that Christ died to save poor drunken fellows like Bill Jackson and himself, was all true in this man's experience and life, and why should it not be in his case? He was nearly as bad as Bill had been, and why couldn't he be turned too. Bill said, "Give your heart to Jesus." Well, he didn't quite understand what that meant, but he thought he understood what "Trust Him" meant. Bill said, "Trust Him now and be saved." "So I will," says John, and next Sunday he came to the school and told me all about it, so I just said "Thank God," and we had a little prayer. "Now, John," said I, "tell us all about it." And so here was John, who a fortnight ago was a low, drunken, Roman Catholic boy, now standing in the midst of his schoolmates telling of what Christ had done for him. Of course John told his parents of the change, and they did raise a hue and cry. "What, lave the ould faith? Is it to turn a souper now?" So John found the place too hot for him, and I had to get a lodging for him for a little while.

After a time John was placed in a situation, as groom to a Christian

gentleman, and it would have done any earnest teacher good to see this gentleman of position standing in the market-place of his native town preaching Christ, and then his groom following him and testifying what Christ was to him.

But John did not get on very well. In his master's words: "I have no fault to find with him, except that he reads his Bible when he ought to be doing his work." The fact was the Book was his delight, and everything was subservient to it. You know we must make great allowances for John, for he was but a beginner, and the Book opened a new world to him, and he would sooner go without his dinner than his Book, and so he left that place, and one of the teachers obtained another situation of a similar kind for him. But John felt himself somewhat aggrieved—he wanted to read his Bible, and others wanted him to work; he read, "Seek *first* the kingdom of heaven," and this he wanted to do. You see he was still rather ignorant. So one day after some words of reproof from his master for his "laziness," he packed up his wardrobe and wandered off, to seek sustenance he scarcely knew how or where. For some days he wandered, until his money was all gone, his hopes fled, his body and limbs weary and worn, and his heart craving for a something, he knew not what; and in this frame of mind he sat to rest by a roadside beershop, and a man good-naturedly offered him a drink out of his mug, which John took and felt revived, and having taken that draught the devil entered into him.

A week after this event I had a letter from a gentleman who had hired a hall at Redington, and this is what he said:—"Dear Sir,—After our gospel meeting on Sunday, I spoke to a young man in the hall who seemed under deep conviction of sin, and on my speaking to him I found he had been formerly in your school, and had professed conversion, but had lately fallen away through drink. His name I don't remember, but you may perhaps remember something of him.—Yours, &c."

"This must be John Sullivan," thought I, and my heart was sad, and unbelief reigned triumphant. Next day I had a note from the lad himself, and he told me all about it. I am afraid I wrote very sharply to him, for I was disappointed and grieved. He obtained work at Redington, and occasionally I heard from him. His fall proved a blessing to him, as it showed him his own weakness and made him watchful. He began again to speak for Christ both to his fellow-workmates and in the open air.

One morning I had a letter to say, "that he had heard a gentleman lecture about 'China,' and that there were millions of people there who had never heard of Jesus, and they wanted young men to go out, and did I think he was fit?" I confessed my inability to decide the point. However, after some consideration he decided to leave his occupation, and went to reside with his friend the missionary for twelve months, during which time he improved wonderfully.

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The other day I had a letter from him, dated "Chinkian, China," telling me he had been able to speak for the first time to a native audience in their own language. Dear fellow-teachers, this is all true. Won't you be encouraged by it?

"THE WORKMEN'S CITY."

"Happy, healthy, cleanly homes, were the basis of all morality and prosperity, and the security of mental and physical strength."—SHAFTESBURY.

SUCH was the designation given by Lord Shaftesbury, some twelve months since, to a new effort to provide comfortable houses for the working classes. At that time the area of the "City" was nothing more than open fields lying between the Wandsworth Road and the railways east of Clapham Junction. In the brief period that has since elapsed 350 houses have been erected on the land, and arrangements are being made to put up 850 more. The "City" will, when complete, consist of at least 1,200 houses. In the centre about three acres will be reserved for a little park, with gymnasium, &c.; schools, library, workmen's hall, and baths, will be provided. There will be a few shops, and a co-operative store, but no publichouses or beershops. The roads are thirty and forty feet wide, with a row of young trees on each side, forming miniature boulevards. The roads and paths are paved as the houses are completed—and as fast as the houses are ready for families they are filled. The houses are of four grades, of 5, 6, 7, and 8 rooms respectively, and let for 5s. 6d. to 9s. 6d. per week, including all rates and taxes. The lease of the houses can be bought, and the purchase money paid by small instalments weekly, monthly, or quarterly. The small houses sell for £150, 99 years' lease, £2 12s. per year ground rent, and the larger ones in proportion. Preference is given to buyers, and all the houses in one completed terrace are sold. The small houses consist of five rooms: on ground-floor a parlour, a living room, and scullery; these are fitted with stoves, kitchener, dresser, copper, sink, larder, closet, coal-cellar, and ash-pit. On first-floor are two bedrooms, with wardrobe cupboards. Great attention has evidently been paid to drainage and ventilation. The material used is superior and the workmanship good. These have been fairly secured by the workmen themselves, as they in all probability would become the owners.

The property, which consists of about forty acres, has been named "The Shaftesbury Park Estate," and belongs to "The Artizans', Labourers', and General Dwellings Company, Limited." The Company has a capital of £250,000. The object is not large dividends, but good homes, and yet, these being provided, the Company can pay a dividend of six per cent. The Company is not a building society, and yet it builds; it is not a loan association, and yet it lends; it is not a bank, and yet it receives deposits. This anomaly among companies is doing a good work, and one that is greatly needed.

The public had an opportunity, on the 3rd of November, of examining these workmen's houses, as on that day the Earl of Shaftesbury and a large company met to go over the estate and to declare it formally open. Mr. Swindlehurst, the manager and secretary of the Company, conducted his lordship over the property. Among the friends following were the Hon·

Evelyn Ashley, Rev. Dr. Mills, Mons. and Madame De Bunsen, Lady Hamilton, Sir Peter Spokes; Messrs. G. and W. Palmer, of Reading; Miss Egginton, Mr. J. Dunn, Mr. Baxter Langley; Mr. Payne, of the Labourers' Friend Society; and Mr. Gent, of the Ragged School Union. The inspection lasted an hour, and then the company gathered in the lecture-hall, where 600 workmen and their families were already seated ready for tea. The following address was then read on behalf of the workmen to his lordship:—

We, the Workmen, employed by the "Artizans', Labourers', and General Dwellings Company, Limited," deem it a great honour to have the opportunity afforded us of giving your lordship a hearty welcome to the "Workmen's City," on the present auspicious occasion.

The inspection of the houses erected since the foundation-stone was laid in August, 1872, by your lordship, will have supplied a convincing proof of the zeal and earnestness of the Board of Directors, Manager, and Architect, in carrying on an undertaking which must necessarily be of immense benefit to great numbers of working men and their families.

Knowing as we do the distinguished services which your lordship has given in aid of sober and intelligent British workmen, we heard with much pleasure that the Directors had decided to pay you a tribute of respect by calling the property the Shaftesbury Park Estate.

For more than thirty years your lordship has ever taken the greatest possible interest in all that could tend to alleviate the burdens and elevate the social position of those who are engaged to a life of incessant toil.

We cannot forget your efforts on behalf of the women and children employed in brickfields, and mining operations, whose emancipation was due, almost, if not entirely, to your lordship's persistent advocacy. Your connection with the short time movement, which has proved of such incalculable benefit to the factory operatives of the manufacturing districts, or your labours in reference to the Truck Act, the Fencing of Machinery, the Ragged School Movements, and last, though not least, the noble efforts your lordship has made for improving the habitations of working people in connection with a Society over which your lordship has so long and so usefully presided; all of which services live in the hearts of millions of working men, both in this country and the colonies.

To recapitulate your lordship's successful exertions would be not merely to write a biography, but to give a complete history of the social changes and improvements which have taken place during that period.

Though there are many great and good men striving earnestly to leave their country better than they found it, we believe we are but echoing the sentiments of the great mass of our fellow-countrymen of all ranks, but more especially of the working classes, when we say in all sincerity that no name is mentioned in English homes with more reverence, respect, and gratitude, than that of your lordship's, and we fervently hope that the Great Disposer of Events may enable you to continue for many more years, your life of mercy and usefulness.

In conclusion, we beg your lordship to accept the accompanying photographs of the buildings on the Estate, and of the portraits of ourselves, your earnest admirers, as a trifling memento of the present very interesting ceremony.

At the conclusion of the reading of this address nine photographs of the different streets of the estate, in three frames, were presented to his lordship.

The Earl of SHAFTESBURY, who remained standing throughout the reading of the address, on receiving it from Mr. Dickinson said he could not do so without feelings of the very deepest emotion. Could he possibly be insensible to an expression of kindness, and he might almost use the word gratitude, from warm-hearted men—from free subjects of the British empire—and from men who had conferred an honour on the country to which they belonged, and who, by the blessing of God, might confer a greater honour still upon themselves and their posterity? There was one expression in the address that he would alter. He was a little jealous, because so far he wished it to be known as an honour to himself and his children that it was forty and not thirty years he had been labouring for the working classes. Perhaps they wished to pay him a compliment by making him appear a younger man than he really was (hear, hear); but he would tell them that he began this work when quite a young man, and he trusted he would continue it till he was "gathered to his fathers." (Hear, hear.) Now, he must congratulate the meeting and himself upon what had been that day exhibited. He felt an inexpressible pleasure in having been allowed to be present on that occasion, and to share with them the joy that must pervade all their hearts when they met together to consider what had been done, and to take courage to go forward and believe that what had been shown them would be an example to all the working people of this great metropolis. (Hear, hear.) He was filled with astonishment when he saw what had been achieved within very little more than twelve months from the day on which he laid the first stone of this great undertaking. Unbounded credit was due to the directors of the Society for their talent, zeal, energy, and perseverance; and he must throw in a word of approbation and praise for the admirable manner in which the architect of the buildings had done his work. (Hear, hear.) He had had many difficulties to contend with, not the least of which were the difficulties of the season. Three hundred and fifty buildings were now inhabited by joyous and comfortable families. This was a great undertaking, and one that made him very seriously reflect, because it began to indicate—it was the strongest proof he had ever yet seen of the truth of the proverb, "Where there's a will there's a way." He had himself long had the will to achieve such a result, but he must confess he did not see the way; but the noble, enterprising British workman had seen a good deal further than himhimself, and the principles which he (Lord Shaftesbury) had enunciated forty years ago the British workman had come forward and reduced to practice. Solomon had said there was nothing new under the sun, and no doubt he was perfectly right; but still there were things which were new to us. A great many people in the present day thought that everything they knew for the first time was new; but this was one of the most pernicious errors that ever prevailed. In respect of Europe, of civilised mankind, and even of our brethren on the other side of the Atlantic, this undertaking was new in conception, in building, and in bringing into operation. It was new that there should be a workmen's city—founded, reared, regulated, and paid for by working people. He knew perfectly well that there were a variety of arguments against such a scheme; but this was not the time to discuss them. They had now to deal with a great and accomplished fact, and it was for the workmen especially to show how they could falsify the opposition of those who doubted of such enterprises by proving that all the difficulties that beset them could be overcome. No doubt it had been an experiment, but it was one of the greatest importance, and he was satisfied that we should never do anything in this world if we were always

afraid of failing. Look boldly forward; let the cause be good, their object right, their principles sound, and their action in conformity with them, and, by God Almighty's help, they would succeed. The experiment they were trying was being tried at a very propitious time. To say nothing of the institution of penny railway fares, of which they all knew the great value—and they would feel it of greater value hereafter—it was taking place at a time when there was almost a universal admission (there were some extraordinary exceptions, he granted) not only of the necessity, but of the absolute indispensability, of providing healthy, happy, secured dwelling for the working people; when there was a universal admission that sanitary appliances were at the very root of the happiness, the health, and the safety of the whole population, from the highest to the very lowest. More especially were they concerned in seeing that these were provided for the working classes, and for this reason—the working classes individually could not take equal and efficient care of themselves. They had not the capital at their command, and therefore it could only be done by associations like these, and by the aid and co-operation of those to whom God had given property and leisure. He was delighted and happy to see this intercourse of all classes, and that without any sense of debt or obligation on either side, but by the recognition of the great principle that we all stand in need of each other and could not do without each other. We were never so happy as when we acknowledged that principle, and honourably and truly acted upon it. He would repeat that it was more especially necessary in respect of the working man, because he was the basis of the thrift and prosperity of this great empire. It was essential to happiness, honour, security, and progress that the working man should be in full possession of, and being in full possession, should have full power to exercise all his great physical and muscular energies. It was necessary because he should be able to do a fair day's work for a fair day's wages — (hear, hear) — that his work might be sound and good — not "scamped," as the phrase went, but answerable to the wages paid for it, and in consistency with the character of the British workman. He would say again that it was necessary that the working man should have the full development and exercise of all his mental energies on the work in which he was engaged; in these days especially it was of essential importance, if we desired and hoped to keep our pre-eminence among the nations in all our industrial projects. He must also, and this was the greatest of all requirements, have full power of developing and maintaining his great moral qualities. Could there be a secure nation with an immoral people? Could there be a nation in danger with a moral and religious people? No. He maintained that religion and morality were the basis of all security, of all permanent prosperity, and it was for that reason he desired that the working man should have the full exercise of his moral powers in the advancement of the honour and securing the permanency of the great empire to which he belonged. Happy, healthy, cleanly homes were the basis of all morality and prosperity, and the security of mental and physical strength. If they doubted this, let them perambulate London, and also read the reports that were constantly published of the miserable state in which some of the districts were. There were many cases where a young married man, full of health and strength, came up from the country to work and was obliged to take some wretched residence near his employment, but from its unhealthy condition lost his life and left his wife and family a burden upon the rates. There were hundreds of such instances, but it was unnecessary to narrate them, as he was speaking to men who knew it well. This workmen's

city, he trusted, would be the beginning of a series of similar ones, where all exigencies were provided for by drainage, water supply, and gas. But what was as necessary as anything else was the privacy and decency which accompanied separate homes. There remained yet one other requirement, and that rested with themselves; this was temperance, and there was no building on the estate for the sale of alcoholic drinks. He need not enlarge on the evils of intemperance, the miseries it brought, financial, intellectual, social, mental; but he would impress upon all the necessity of economy and thrift, particularly in the early years of life. When a man got a family growing up round him he was, perhaps, prevented from saving; but if young men began to save as soon as they got employment they would find it easy. Savings banks would be established on the estate, and clubs for all kinds of providence. His lordship then showed how the children of sixty Ragged Schools had, in the course of twelve months, saved as much as £2,000, which, when distress came upon their parents, they were able to draw upon in relief of their necessities. Having stated that a great deal had been done for the working classes of this country, he exhorted his hearers to endeavour to improve the condition of those who were in a lower position than themselves—namely, the labourers. He thought that if the condition of the working classes was improved some of the difficulties between capital and labour would be solved. Many combinations and strikes had arisen among working people from a sense of weakness; but if a man had got his own house, from which nobody could eject him, he would be able to stand forward and maintain his rights. But each side should listen to the other, as no side was exclusively right or exclusively wrong. (Cheers.) He said that the operatives need not fear misrepresentation if they were only true to themselves. He repeated the anecdote told of that great scholar, Dr. Bentley, when some one addressed him with the information that a certain individual was about to write him down. "My friend," said Dr. Bentley, "be assured that the task is beyond his power. No man was ever written down but by his own misconduct." (Laughter and cheers.) So he would say to the working classes, they need not fear being reviled or misrepresented, except from their own defaults. He had loved the working men, and laboured for them, but he had never sought to gain their favour by empty flattery. He desired always to remember that they were immortal beings, before whom were placed the glorious hopes and prospects brought to light by Christianity.

The noble earl, who had been most attentively listened to, sat down amidst loud and reiterated cheers. At the conclusion of this address, which lasted nearly an hour, the company sat down to tea. The remainder of the evening was diversified with musical performances and speeches.

MR. PROUDMAN'S LECTURES TO RAGGED SCHOOL TEACHERS.—These lessons on the "Tonic Sol-fa" system to Ragged School teachers commenced at Field Lane Ragged School on October 21. Held under the auspices of the Ragged School Union, and the Reformatory and Refuge Union, they are attended by about 100 teachers attached either to Ragged Schools or Reformatories.

In Memoriam.

MRS. ELIZABETH THATCHER.

DURING the past year Death has called to their eternal rest no less than ten of our most steadfast friends and teachers. Notices of nine of these devoted servants of Christ, including a daughter of Lord Shaftesbury, have already appeared in our pages. We have now to add a brief account of another equally earnest Ragged School Teacher, MRS. ELIZABETH THATCHER, the wife of the experienced Superintendent of Amicable Row, Kent Street, Ragged School.

H. H., in the *Sunday School Times*, thus sketches her life:—

"Mrs. Thatcher, formerly Miss Elizabeth Spratt, had the privilege of being born of parents who loved God, and were desirous of training their children in the way wherein they should go. Her mother especially was a Christian who feared God above many,—energetic, wise, intelligent, and determined by God's grace that her children should follow Christ. Her pains and her prayers were not in vain in the Lord; and the Spirit which God has so graciously promised to rest on the offspring of the righteous was given, to incline our dear friend to give her heart to Jesus.

My first recollections of her were in the capacity of a teacher at Amicable Row, Kent Street, Sunday Evening Ragged School, where she laboured as a teacher from the opening of the school in 1861 to the time of her death.

As a teacher she displayed great devotedness to the work. Though living at a considerable distance, her attendance was regular and punctual. In fact, she was often at her post when perhaps prudence would have suggested that she was testing her health and strength too much. However that may be, it was apparent to all who knew her how dearly she loved the Saviour who died for her, and how anxious she was to win the hearts of the children to love Him too. She liked to stay to the meetings for prayer which were held after the school had been dismissed, and her faith and hope were much strengthened thereby.

Soon after the school was established she began a Working Class for girls, teaching them to cut out and make their own clothes, which were sold to them at half the cost price. An average of about twenty attended this meeting; and many a child by this means has been enabled to have warm and good clothing to wear during the cold weather of the winter. This was especially a favourite work with her, and in the course of the evening she embraced the opportunity by a few loving words of impressing the past Sabbath's instruction upon the minds of the children. Another branch of her labour was in the management of two boxes of clothing, which were lent to the poor mothers of the neighbourhood in time of sick-

ness, when she would visit and relieve them, and was accustomed to read and pray with them. From these may many a gem sparkle in her crown of glory.

After her marriage with the superintendent of this Ragged School she did not cease to feel deeply interested in the work among the poor neglected ones, and was ever glad to make such domestic arrangements as would allow her husband to discharge the duties of superintendent of this large Ragged School, and the weekly management of the flourishing Penny Bank attached to Harrow Street Ragged School.

She rejoiced in the extension of the work of God among her near relations, and was specially gratified with the prospect of her sister and sister's husband being about to be admitted to the church at the Metropolitan Tabernacle. When opportunity served she was happy to attend the Week Evening Services of that place of worship. She was leaving the Prayer Meeting held there on Monday, the 8th of September, in company with her sister, when suddenly, while in conversation with her, she was seized with a fit, fell to the ground, and became quite unconscious. She was taken into the chapel, and when her husband arrived was removed to her own house; but it was but to die there, for in the morning of the next day her happy spirit was called into the presence of her Saviour. Having one little girl of five years old, and an infant of twenty-three months, her life, humanly speaking, could ill be spared; but her work was ended, and her Master called her home to be for ever with the Lord.

May her esteemed husband receive the consolation which he needs, and may the little lambs be carried in the Saviour's bosom and find a happy resting-place there."

These sudden deaths seem to say to every faithful labourer in Ragged Schools, "Be ye steadfast, unmoveable; *always* abounding in the work of the Lord." Whilst to those who are still idlers in Christ's vineyard, do not these gaps in our ranks seem to speak as with audible voice, "Fill up at once the vacant place—another man to the front"!

Poet's Corner.

A LITTLE WHILE.

Oh! for the peace which floweth as a river,
Making life's desert places bloom and smile!
Oh! for the faith to grasp heaven's bright for ever,
Amid the shadows of this "little while."

"A little while" for patient vigil-keeping,
To face the storm, to wrestle with the strong;
"A little while" to sow the seed with weeping,
Then bind the sheaves and sing the harvest song.

"A little while" to wear the robe of sadness,
And toil with weary steps through miry ways;
Then to pour forth the fragrant oil of gladness,
And clasp the girdle round the robe of praise.

"A little while" 'midst shadow and illusion,
To strive, by faith, love's mysteries to spell;
Then read each dark enigma's bright solution,
And hail sight's verdict, "He doth all things well."

"A little while" to keep the oil from failing,
"A little while" faith's flickering lamp to trim;
And then the Bridegroom's coming footsteps hailing,
To haste to meet Him with the bridal hymn.

Thus He who is himself the gift and giver,
The future glory and the present smile,
With the bright shadow of that glad "for ever"
Can light the promise of the "little while."

Teachers' Column.

THE TEACHER'S "GIFT."

THERE is a wide difference in Sunday School teachers. Why? The good things of this world were not all cast in the same mould; yet there is fitness, adaptation; a place for every thing and every one. Sometimes there is a little need of trimming, hewing, polishing. The rough quarry stone must receive many strokes from the hammer, many touches from the tool of the artist, before it becomes the beautiful statue.

Why, then, so marked a difference in Sunday School teachers?—in their ability to instruct, to interest, to fix the attention of their pupils, to influence them? Ah! some have the "gift," you say. Is it a gift? We prefer to call it a *qualification*—one which every person who has sufficient natural ability to become a teacher may possess. We have on other occasions alluded to the importance of thorough acquaintance with the lesson; but a mere acquaintance with the lesson in itself considered is not enough. In the Week-day School the difference is as distinctly marked as in the Sunday School. Many teachers err in their ideal of what constitutes a teacher. A much larger proportion of school committees, school trustees, and school superintendents err in this ideal. No one can teach arithmetic well who knows nothing of the higher branches of mathematical science; no one can teach English grammar who knows nothing of the higher departments of philology; no one can teach philosophy who knows only what is found in the little manual he uses as a text-book. He must step outside. He must make himself master of all those various subjects with which the science he teaches stands intimately connected, or even remotely connected. So with the Sunday School teacher; he must make himself master of all Biblical science if he would possess this much-coveted "gift." We would not be misunderstood; we do not mean to say he must make himself acquainted with these things, but he must *master* them. Then he will be qualified to im-

part instruction. But this is not enough. Many men thus qualified fail in their efforts to teach.

The Sunday School teacher deals with mind, not matter. He must make himself acquainted with mental evolutions; he must be a mental philosopher. Here is one of the chief defects in our Sunday School teaching. It is true we enter the Sunday School to teach *children*, and, in many cases, children whose opportunities for mental culture have been very limited. So much the more necessity for a thorough acquaintance with the philosophy of the human mind—of mind in its first stages of development. We remember how we were delighted in childhood with the music of the violin as the skilful musician brought out his varied strains, now imitating the sweetest of human voices, now the gentle rustle of the evening breeze as it plays among the leaves. We longed to get hold of the bow; and when we did, we found no music, but hoarse, rough sounds which grated harshly on the ear. The fault was not in the elastic strings, was not in the bow; it was in the hand that moved it.

We must study the order of development. We must *know* that order, and our mode of instruction must coincide with it; otherwise we are liable to frustrate our own plans and fail of our purpose.—*Sunday School Teacher.*

WATCH AND PRAY.

Poor Tom had been converted when a slave, had learned to read, was called to the dying bed of his master to read the Bible, was emancipated by his master's will, and, after having redeemed his wife, had removed to the suburbs of Philadelphia.

Poor Tom said to Mr. P—, "Massa, me hear you are going to study to be a minister!"

"Yes."

"Will you let Poor Tom say one thing to you?"

"Yes."

"Well, you know the good Master says 'Watch and pray.' Now you may watch all the time, and if you no pray, the devil will get in. You may pray all the time, and if you no watch too, the devil will get in. But if you watch and pray all the time, the devil no get in; for it is just like the sword of God put into the hand of the angel at the entering of the garden—it turn every way. If the devil come before, it turn there; if the devil come behind, it turn there. Yes, massa, it turn every way."

Children's Gallery.

A RAGGED SCHOOL HERO.

For some years William Sermon attended the Richmond Street Ragged School, Maida Hill. Quick in learning, he was equally marked by nobleness of disposition. From the Ragged School he was transferred to its Refuge, and from thence he entered the Royal Navy. Brave and intelligent as well as good, he soon won the respect of his officers and brother sailors. He now ranks as A. B., or able seaman.

Nor did he forget the "old folks at home." For from his wages he lately sent a sum of money to the superintendent of the Ragged School, to be given to his mother in small sums according to her need. Need we say that a good son rarely makes a bad man?

Some sailors belonging to his ship, the *Rattlesnake*, recently landed on the hostile shore of the Gold Coast. They were seen and speedily attacked by the natives. Most managed to escape, but one wounded sailor was left behind in the power of a furious enemy. William

saw this, and at once jumped overboard. Though the shore was thronged by enemies and the surf raged terribly, he swam through the raging sea, grasped the body of his shipmate, and bore it on board triumphantly, amid the cheers of the officers and men who witnessed the gallant deed.

The captain noticed this heroic action, and in his despatch to the Home Government "recommended him to the favourable notice of the authorities." This means, we believe, that he will soon wear the Victoria Cross. Never, indeed, was this medal more deservedly won. And we are glad to find that it will decorate the breast of a good as well as of a brave Ragged School boy.

S. A.

A CHRISTMAS STORY.

"ALL my pennies I save for Christmas," said Uncle John to a group of boys, who were talking over the amount of their spending-money for the holidays.

The smiling faces were turned towards him with a look of inquiry. "Yes, you need not look so surprised! I am as careful of my pennies as you are, and I have a whole box full, ready for this coming Christmas."

"What do you want with them, Uncle John?" said little Tommy Bell. "Do you buy knives and balls?"

"My pennies do, sometimes."

"I know what Uncle John means," said Willy Moore; "he gives his pennies away; *he* does not spend them."

"That's it, Willy, I put them out to interest; do you want to know how I manage?"

"Yes, oh yes! do tell us, uncle!" exclaimed a dozen voices.

"Well, the day before Christmas-day I go along the streets where the toy-shops are, for I love to see the happy faces of the boys and girls as they crowd in and out of these places with their hands full of the pretty things they have bought; but my *business* is not with *them*. There are other children in the street beside these happy, laughing ones, and to them I direct my attention. At one window, where all sorts of beautiful things are displayed, stand three or four ragged, dirty, shivering little boys, their sad pale faces pressed against the glass, and their longing eyes resting first on one, then on another, of the pretty toys you all love so well. Poor little fellows! I can scarcely keep the tears from coming to my eyes when I look at them and think of their sad lot. Now I have use for my pennies; my pockets are filled with them, and I slip a few into the hands of each boy; and it does my heart good to see the delightful surprise with which they look up into my face. After being assured that the pennies are their *own*, to use just as they please, with a hearty 'Thank you, sir,' sometimes, 'God bless you, sir,' they hurry into the shop to see what they can get. But, as I said, my pennies do not *always* buy toys. Last year, a day or two before Christmas, I stopped at a window around which some children were gathered, and presently my attention was drawn to a very little girl, standing close by me, with her eyes intently fixed on a doll. Her dress was clean, but very shabby. She had an interesting, intelligent face, and before offering her some pennies I spoke to her. 'My little girl, would you like to have that doll?'

"'Oh, yes, sir; but I never *can* have such a beautiful doll; I am only looking at it.'

"'If I give you some money, will you go in and buy it?'

"She looked at me for a moment, and then, while tears gathered in her large blue eyes, she replied:—'Oh no, sir! My mother is very sick, and if *I had* some money, I would get her some tea; she has not had any for a week.'

"Taking the child by the hand, I said, 'Take me to your mother.'

"We soon reached the place. Three old chairs, a small table, and a bed

formed the furniture of the room, and everything was as clean as soap and water could make it. The mother, a delicate-looking woman, was busily engaged sewing for the tailors. The pay was so small, she said, it was with great difficulty she could pay for her rooms, and keep her family from starving; 'but,' she added, 'I am not complaining: the Lord provides for the widow and the fatherless, and *safely keeps those who trust in Him.*' I stayed a long time with this good woman and her dear little girl, and you may be sure, boys, they had a good dinner that Christmas, and Nancy got her doll too. So that is the way *my* pennies go. Do you wonder now why I save them?"

"No, indeed, Uncle John," said James Allen; "and I think we may all learn a lesson from you, and do some good with our Christmas pennies."

You know, dear children, that "*God loves a cheerful giver.*"

MABEL.

Correspondence.

SPECIAL SERVICES FOR PARENTS' MEETINGS.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

SIR,—Mr. Groom's suggestion as to the duty of ministers to preach special sermons to parents of Ragged Scholars (see *ante*, p. 259), is so valuable that I trust it will be adopted by the ministers of all branches of the one church.

But this leads to two suggestions, which I beg to submit to my fellow-labourers in Ragged Schools.

First: I think it is desirable for the Ragged Churches connected with the Ragged School Union to devote a Sunday evening occasionally to the parents of our scholars. Their attendance might be secured by handbills left in shops, or taken home by the scholars. This was done on two occasions by one of the pioneers in this movement at Blandford Mews (now York Mews) Ragged School, and with great success. Many, in fact, were led, through the solicitation of their children, to attend the special services who had not entered the house of prayer since their marriage.

Second: The parents belonging to adjacent Fathers' Clubs and Mothers' Meetings should be invited to a *united* service in some central church or chapel, or, which would be better still, in both, so as to suit every class of opinion.

In both cases the sermon should be strictly confined to the special religious and social exigencies of poor parents—or, in other words, the aim of the preachers should be to teach them *how* to "show piety at home." The hymns should be lively and revivalistic, and the whole service should show that the preachers *really* believed that men have souls to be saved or lost for ever.

And surely no evangelistic effort could be more desirable than this. Napoleon the First once said that "what France wanted was *mothers.*"

But when we look at the homes and habits, the manners and customs, of the parents of Ragged Scholars, we are constrained to add—*Fathers!*

Two or three benefits would accrue from such services. Thus the parents would learn to what a large corporation they belong; for I understand that the united membership of our Parents' Meetings is no less than 2,706. Then, again, many who are now "conspicuous by their absence" from the public means of grace would be brought within earshot of the gospel trumpet—many probably to their eternal safety. But whether the issue was salvation or not, our parents would learn their responsibility as parents, and so be led to cease to train their offspring "in the way in which they should '*not*' go!"

Yours, &c.,

Q IN THE CORNER.

CHRISTMAS GIFTS.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

SIR,—I think it may be interesting to your readers to know how much pleasure may be given by following the advice of a truly Christian lady. She recommends children to send *their old toys*, &c., to the workhouses near them. My children have before Christmas, ever since this lady wrote to them, sent off a large hamper of toys, pictures, little books, a few nuts, oranges, and sweetmeats, to our Union Workhouses, for the poor little children who have so few joys. Each year we get such a thankful letter from the wife of the chaplain of the Union, telling us that our hamper has given great delight to *all* the inmates, the old people rejoicing for the children's sakes.

It has occurred to me that this year we might also send a few comforts, such as a little tea, sugar, or warm cuffs and comforters, for the members of your Mothers' Meetings, and indeed for Ragged Scholars generally.

The pleasure that the packing and collecting of the goods occasion is very great to my children, and the expense is so very trifling that I think there can be no nursery unable to afford it.

I have no doubt numbers of your readers have done as we have done; but with the hope that some may again be stirred up, by hearing of the success in our Union, I venture to trouble you with these few lines.

With the heartfelt hope that the "Ragged School Magazine" may long be a blessing,

I remain, yours truly,

E.

SERVICE OF SONG.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

DEAR SIR,—I was much gratified in reading your report of a Service of Song conducted in the Kingsland Ragged School.

It is exceedingly desirable that these should be multiplied, as they provide an admirable counteractive to the ribald songs which escape into the streets from low music-halls. Such excellencies are united, as they are not

only a means of cultivating the ears and the hearts of the children, but a means also of gratification and entertainment to the parents, and one proof to them that "religion never was designed to make our pleasures less."

To make the public entertainment effective, there must be much practice, which will be rendered easy and lastingly beneficial if, instead of being merely trained by ear, the eye is used also. As a ready introduction to music, the tonic sol-fa method is pre-eminent. In order to aid teachers in this subject, I learn that the Ragged School Union have, in common with the Reformatory and Refuge Union, engaged the services of Mr. Proudman, so well known in the musical world, to lecture on, and exercise teachers in, that system.

On public occasions there should be a platform, and an augmentation of the choir by select voices of the teachers, who should add strength and brightness to the sweetness of the children's strains. A reader with a voice of good compass and elocutionary ability is also indispensable. That the teachers should not be fettered in the choice of evenings for practice, as well as on those for the public entertainment, the room of an evening should be at their service.

Besides this, the various agencies that have sprung out of the Ragged School movement, and which now constitute a harmonious system of means for the benefit of poor children and their parents, viz., Evening Schools for boys and girls above the school age, who need humanising as well as instruction in letters, Bands of Hope, Sunday Bands, Penny Banks, Sewing Classes, Mothers' Meetings, &c., &c., need an open stage for their free exercise.

No Committee, it is hoped, with the true missionary spirit, will permit itself to be overridden and hampered by any extraneous body in the use of its own property. I remain, dear Sir, yours, &c.,

A WORKER.

Notices of Meetings.

SNOWSFIELDS, BERMONDSEY.

The ninth anniversary of the Snowsfields Sunday Evening Ragged School was held in the Melior Street School-rooms.

After tea Mr. James W. Upton read a short statement respecting the school. During the year the average attendance of children had been 120. To these magazines of various kinds had been freely and extensively distributed, together with a large number of Bibles; thus instructing and elevating a class of very poor and ignorant little ones, but for which they would be dragged up in the lanes and courts of this degraded district, and add their quota to its immorality. The operations in connection with the school have, however, been greatly limited through lack of teachers. The committee, therefore, earnestly appeal for help to all who feel constrained to engage in this department of the Lord's vineyard.

The teachers then adjourned to Snowsfields Schoolroom, where upwards of 130 children were assembled. The hymn commencing "Let us with a gladsome mind" having been sung, and prayer offered, earnest and appropriate addresses were delivered by Mr. Moffat, on "The Aim of Christian Teachers;" Mr. Morgan, "Jesus the only Saviour;" Mr. Fleming, "The Need for such Institutions as Ragged Schools;" Mr. Templeman, "Religion a Path of Pleasantness;" and Mr. James W. Upton, "The Gospel."

The benediction was pronounced, and the majority of the scholars were dismissed. Some, however, remained to join their teachers, who engaged in fervent prayer for the speedy conversion of all whom they seek to instruct in the principles and duties of the pure and holy religion of Christ.

MILDMAY PARK.

The annual meeting of the Children's Special Service Mission was held on Monday, the 27th October, at the Conference Hall, Mildmay Park. In the afternoon a Prayer Meeting was held, at which the Rev. J. G. Gregory presided, and an address was given by Mr. T. J. Hughes, entitled "Rest in Christ the True Secret of Success in Labour for the Lord; a Word to Workers amongst the Children." A public meeting was held in the evening, Mr. Stevenson Blackwood in the chair. About 1,000 persons were present, a great number of whom were workers in Children's Services from distant parts of London.

Mr. T. B. Bishop, one of the honorary secretaries of the mission, read a statement showing the great progress which the Children's Service movement had made during the past twelve months. This report went on to speak of the formation of the "Children's Evangelistic Band," which had been organised to conduct from time to time in any schools in London a week of special services for the young. It now numbers between seventy and eighty members. There are seven divisions, in as many districts of London, the leaders being Messrs. Tyler, Wigner, Jordan, Gordon, Hill, Russell, and Rickards.

The Rev. J. G. Gregory, of Park Chapel, Chelsea, gave an address on the importance of special efforts to lead the young to early decision for Christ. He urged that children needed conversion, and that special efforts were necessary to lead them to Jesus in their childhood, and he showed that evangelistic services for the young, and the conversational meetings following them, were just the special efforts that were needed to bring about the desired end.

The Rev. George Savage, of St. John's, Bexley, then spoke on individual dealing with the souls of children. In order to deal successfully with children in a religious sense it was necessary that those who undertook the work should be men of faith. In the children's services held by this mission they had several hymns and short prayers, and short earnest addresses; and then, after the great truths of the gospel had thus been set forth, the service was closed, and the conversational meeting held. The latter was the very harvest-field of the work. The meeting broke up in little groups, and the conductors got a few children round them, and began with prayer, and then personal conversation. And after speaking to the group of children, it was well to speak to them and pray with them separately, and by these means great good might be accomplished.

The Rev. J. Bennett, of Ashbourn, next spoke on the training of Christian children, and the dangers to which they are exposed.

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